

**Myakka River Management Coordinating Council
SWFWMD Sarasota Service Office
6750 Fruitville Road
Sarasota, FL 34240
February 24, 2017
9:30 A. M. – 12:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

The meeting began at 9:30 A. M. with Jono Miller presiding. This meeting was advertised in the Herald Tribune on Friday, February 10, 2017.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Jono Miller – Sierra Club
Mike Chouinard – Homeowner
Tara Poulton – SWFWMD
Gillian Carney – City of Venice
Allain Hale – ECOSWF
Elizabeth Wong – City of North Port
Heather Young – TBRPC
Bill Byle – Charlotte County
Jennifer Hecker – CHNEP
Tim Walker-SW Regional Planning Council
Steven Schaefer – Friends of Myakka River

Corky Pezzati – SC LWV
Marlene Guffey - Homeowner
Rob Wright- Sarasota Audubon
Howard Berna - SCNR
Steve Giguere- FDEP/FPS
Glenn Compton – ManaSota-88
Greg Blanchard – Manatee County
Lee Amos – CFGC
Eric Strickland - FFS
Bob Clark – Venice Area Audubon
Juliette Jones – Friends of WMS

INTERESTED PARTIES

Chris Oliver – FDEP/FPS
Chris Becker – FDEP/FPS
Jean Blackburn - citizen
Lisann Morris - SWFWMD
Jon Meyer – FDEP/FPS/Myakka River State Park

Nadine Hallenbeck – FDEP/FPS
Diana Donaghy – Sarasota County
Becki Babb - citizen
Donald Ellis – SWFWMD

- **Call to Order was made.**
- **Approval of the Meeting Minutes from December 2, 2016 Council Meeting.**
Glenn Compton moved adoption of the Minutes. Steve Schaefer seconded. The Minutes were adopted.

OLD BUSINESS:

Jono updated everyone on the letter he sent to the Sarasota County Commission. He met with all five commissioners. He has two copies of the letter available to read.

Chris Oliver gave an update on the pilot rowing program at Senator Bob Johnson's Landing. Shawn Yeager advised Chris that Sarasota County has not submitted an application for a permit

for this activity to the (FDEP) South District Regulatory Office yet. They are still considering their options and reviewing options for rowing activities for that area.

NEW BUSINESS:

The new members introduced themselves. Rob Wright is the conservation chair with Sarasota Audubon Society. They are becoming more active in environmental issues within Sarasota, Manatee and Charlotte Counties.

Bob Clark is the representative for the Venice Area Audubon Society. They cover North Port up through Nokomis. They are trying to get representation in the North Port area.

Lee Amos is with the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. They are a private, not for profit land conservancy based in Osprey. One of their focus areas is the Myakka River watershed. Their goal is to protect another 10,000 acres on the Myakka in the next 5 years. Triangle Ranch was completed in 2016 and Orange Hammock Ranch should be completed in 2017.

Juliette Jones is one of the directors of the Friends of Warm Mineral Springs. Their mission is to preserve, protect and educate people about Warm Mineral Springs as well as other springs in Florida. They are members of the Florida Springs Institute, which is an educational organization run by scientists, environmentalists and educators from the University of Florida.

Chris added that Dixie Resnick will represent Crowley Museum and Nature Center.

Updates:

Howard Berna-Sarasota County Update:

Howard had nothing new to report.

Jono asked if he knew what the status of acquiring the oyster bar.

Howard does not have any new information on that.

Greg Blanchard-Manatee County Update:

The board approved the rezone of the Master Mine Plan for the Wingate Mine expansion. The county is waiting for the operating permit before moving forward. This should occur within a year.

Jono asked when the money from Mosaic was going to be given to acquire land along the Myakka River

Greg stated that he was not sure.

Bill Byle-Charlotte County Community Development Update:

Charlotte County is considered one of the fastest growing areas. There is a lot of new development happening on the West side of the Myakka River below the 776 bridge. This area is called South Gulf Cove. It has canals with locks and is monitored very carefully, even though, the county did not choose to be part of the (Wild and Scenic River) program. As this area grows, they are expecting more interest in removing the locks. He suggested the Council keep an eye on this issue.

Glen Compton asked what Charlotte County's take on Mosaic was.

Bill replied that at one time the county may have made comments on Mosaic's purposed activities but they met with the county commission and came up with an agreement where the county would stop criticizing phosphate mining.

Discussion continued about mining in the watershed.

Elizabeth Wong-City of North Port Update:

They are working with USGS to install a gage to measure the flow at Warm Mineral Springs. SWFWMD is funding half of it. They are going to constantly monitor the flow and see how it is changing over time.

Juliette asked if the gage is measuring total content.

Elizabeth replied it is measuring flow in terms of CFS (cubic feet per second) from the whole spring.

Jono asked if it will measure temperature or water quality.

Elizabeth stated that it will measure temperature and conductivity. She discussed that the septic system has been abandoned and the site is connected to the central sewer now. Low impact development is very important to North Port. A new garden with native Florida vegetation and new playground with all pervious material, including the connecting sidewalks is being put in. A new walking trail, in pervious concrete, at Pine Park is being put in. An old nature trail along the Myakkahatchee Creek on the East side is being restored.

Bob asked about connecting Center Road in Venice and Price Boulevard in North Port.

Elizabeth replied it is not in the city's 5-year plan but they are trying to widen Price Boulevard.

Bill asked if there are any water quality studies being done at WMS. His concern was with the radioactive materials in the first 100 feet of the land due to the geothermals coming up through the layers.

Elizabeth replied that she is not sure. The Department of Health monitors the water quality of the springs but she does not know if they monitor the radioactivity as well.

Gillian Carney-City of Venice Update:

The total of 1377 units were approved for the Venice Golf and River Club (VGRC) and the last 12 units are currently under way. They expect to be completed by the end of 2017. The Woods property has been rezoned as PUD, nothing has been submitted yet for preliminary plan review.

Marlene raised a concern about draining 1300 homes into the Myakka River.

Chris clarified by adding that the VGRC drains into a stormwater system, which is a group of connected vegetative lakes for treatment.

Marlene was concerned that the Council is not being heard about impacts on the river and asked about the developments that are being purposed for Border Road near Jacaranda Boulevard area (the Neal Communities parcels).

Elizabeth explained that with a stormwater pond, nothing goes directly into the river. The ponds store the water so the pollutants can settle to the bottom.

Marlene questioned what will be done when the river comes up and floods the ponds.

Jono noted that he does not agree with the assessment but the designers of the purposed stormwater system would say that area is slow to flood, explaining that it takes days for water to come down from Tatum Sawgrass and the Myakka Lakes, so by the time that area does receive these flood waters, the stormwater ponds will be low enough to accommodate the extra water.

Discussion continued on regulation on flooding, nutrient pollution, and stormwater BMPs; as well as, ways to change policies and rules at the local and state levels.

Glen asked about the City's comprehensive plan update. He also asked about any changes to existing protections noting that he heard some were being deleted and combined.

Gillian stated she is not involved in that process and does not have any information on that. She offered to email Chris so it could be distributed to the members so they may comment.

Glen requested that the City of Venice Comprehensive Plan be placed on the next agenda so the Council can receive an update.

Jono encouraged members to draft a document with any concerns they have and, at future meetings, it can be voted on.

Allain suggested that the Council contact Neal (Communities) and SWFWMD and ask them to come to the next meeting as a starting point.

Gillian advised that the planning commission is meeting on March 7, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. and there are workshops planned for March 13th and 16th and a public hearing on April 12th. (**Editor's note:** the March 16th workshop was changed to 22nd after the meeting. Current information may be found on City's website at:

http://venicegov.com/Municipal_links/Plann_zoning/CompPlanUpdate.asp.)

Jennifer Hecker-Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP) Update:

The CHNEP has a brand-new website and Facebook page. They will be sponsoring a biodiversity conference at the Florida Gulf Coast University on March 7-9. The Charlotte Harbor Watershed Summit is 3/28-3/30. This is where scientific experts throughout the region are brought together to present the latest scientific information on water resources and aquatic life. The event is free but you have to pay for lunch. They are planning a sea level rise workshop for local governments in June 2017. The CHNEP from Venice to Bonita Springs to Winter Haven was designated in 1995 and, as a result, over half a million dollars was received every year for scientific research and restoration projects. If future funding is cut for this program it would be a great loss to the community.

Tara Poulton-SWFWMD (WMD) Update:

The WMD is working closely with Sarasota County on the Dona Bay project and staff could come in a future meeting from SWFWMD to discuss the project in detail.

Eric Strickland-Florida Forest Service:

Tom Mallet is now with Sarasota County. His position is currently open but they are actively looking for someone to fill it. The state forest had 10,430 day-use visitors since November 2016. There have been 1,394 overnight primitive campers. They have had 1,001 acres of prescribed burns. The hog removal program has had 31 hogs removed, 26.4 acres of cogon grass, 184 acres of melaleuca and 1.2 acres of rosary peas have been treated.

Allain asked about the restoration of long leaf pine habitats.

Eric replied that the Long Leaf Alliance has been an asset in getting that ecosystem improved.

Bill asked if there have been any panthers or red-cockaded woodpeckers in the forest.

Eric replied that he has not seen any of either and added that he does not anticipate seeing any red-cockaded woodpeckers because they need large pines which the state forest does not have.

Chris Oliver-Myakka Wild & Scenic River (MWSR) Update:

The MWSR Program continues to work with the South District Regulatory Office on existing applications and permits with compliance issues. The program recently submitted a Cooperative Funding application to the WMD to study the Upper Myakka Lake bypass and weir area. The bypass culvert area was blown out from rains in May of 2016. The application has been withdrawn, but they are looking with the WMD and FWC about other possibilities to fund a feasibility study. Water conditions remain low, since November 2016 the range has been between 2 feet and 1.75 feet. This is good for the wildlife. On February 21, 2017, state park staff burned the Big Flats Marsh area. The burn was 227 acres and there were 1,800 visitors that day. The closure period on the Myakka Rookery/Critical Wildlife Area has been moved recently from March 1st to January 1st. On January 19, 2017, there were already 134 birds including 111 wood storks. They were already preparing nest and mating. In February, there were approximately 80 nests.

Glen asked with the increase in coyotes is there a decline in feral hogs.

Steve Giguere replied that the state park continues to actively trap and remove hogs. They are not seeing as much hog sign as they have historically. A combination of resource management activities, outside predators, and poor food conditions due to long flood periods in previous years may be suppressing feral hog populations.

Lee mentioned there was some illegal vegetation cutting at the Tarpon Point Landing area and wondered if Chris had seen anything else like this along the river.

Chris responded that usually happens between Border Road and above Laurel toward the South boundary of Myakka River State Park. He passed Tarpon Point Landing on February 14th but did not see clear signs of illegal cutting. He suggested they coordinate with the sheriff range deputies and the FWC.

Break 10:57 a.m. - 11:12 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

Flatford Swamp Update: Lisann Morris (Project Manager), Senior Professional Engineer and Don Ellison (Technical Lead), Senior Hydrogeologist

Lisann asked how many people were aware of the issues in Flatford Swamp. She explained that there is excess water effecting the swamp. A few years ago, they were looking to send the excess water up to the Mosaic mine to be used instead of ground water. That option was deemed unfeasible. They are now doing a feasibility study of aquifer recharge instead.

Mike Choinard asked why that was unfeasible.

Lisann replied that the cost outweighed the benefit but she would cover that more later.

Lisann showed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposal starting with a brief overview of Flatford Swamp which is located in the upper portion of the Myakka River Watershed in Eastern Manatee County, 2300 acres of it is owned by the WMD. In the 80s and 90s, abnormal tree die off was being reported, studies were done and it was revealed that there was too much excess water due to agricultural irrigation, land use changes and hydraulic alterations, like ditching that effected the rise and fall of water levels in the swamp. She explained that the swamp is like a series of bowls at the bottom of a hill. The Myakka River comes in from the North, tributaries come in from the East and the West and the river leaves and heads South. In the surrounding area, not far from the surface, is a spodic layer, which is like a coffee filter that has been clogged. When water infiltrates and hits the spodic layer, soil starts to fill up and the water starts to go down gradient. The WMD's water budget model for the Upper Myakka River Watershed indicated that excess flows, depending on if in the dry or wet season, could range from 7 to 30 mgd.

Construction of diversion structures is proposed at the Myakka River at Maple Creek and the confluence of Coker and Ogleby Creeks. By maintaining the minimum aquifer level, they can slow down and reduce the rate of saltwater intrusion inland. They are looking at recharging the excess water at Flatford into the aquifer, so they can see the rise in the ground water levels for

the SWIMAL wells and help the swamp hydroperiod. A consultant has been charged with exploring the permeability of recharge and optimizing the diversion structures. The feasibility study is done, they are waiting for the final deliverables and a draft FDEP permit has been submitted for a test well with a zone of discharge. DEP has been granting a zone of discharge for certain projects such as aquifer recharge and aquifer recharge and recovery. A zone of discharge is where the permittee must meet water quality standards at their property boundary. The public meeting was January 9, 2017. The test well is located off Wauchula Road and Taylor Road in the Flatford Swamp. The proposed recharge well would be drilled approximately 1,000 feet down. The source water will be the excess water coming in to Flatford Swamp. There are two monitor wells. One drilled down into the recharge zone and the other one is about 600 feet in the zone above. There are some domestic and irrigation wells within a one mile radius but they are deeper than 800 feet. None of these wells are in the recharge zone.

The water quality must be tested and a request to DEP will be made for approval prior to starting the recharge of the surface water down the well. The source water has to be tested for primary and secondary drinking water standards. So far, coliform is the only one above the drinking water standards but that is where the zone of discharge comes in and die off occurs within 90 days.

They will begin with very small quantities, less than 1 mgd, and work up from there depending on the results during the test recharge protocol. The permit requires two monitor wells but they are considering another one, 350 feet away, to keep better track of what is happening, as well as, testing the water quality more often.

Some modeling was done to get a better idea of how long the water will take to get to the property boundary, ranging from 1 year to 5 years.

The recharge well will be cased down 950 feet and the drilling will be 1,000 feet or more. They also wanted to see what kind of results they would get in the SWIMAL wells. If they recharge 10 mgd at Flatford, they found they can get .819 feet. The deficit in the minimum aquifer level is about 1 foot. There is the possibility for great gains in meeting the minimum aquifer level that would reduce the rate of salt water intrusion inland.

The process for this project was to submit the permit application, the private and agricultural well users were contacted, one on one meetings with stakeholders were held, presentations to the advisory committees were done and the public meeting for the permit was held in January. There is additional information watermatters.org/Flatford. Once the WMD receives the permit, the test well will be drilled, the monitor wells will be drilled, water quality will be tested and aquifer recharge characteristics to see if what is in the field is what the modeling predicted. DEP was contacted for permission to move forward to recharging surface water. The testing period is anticipated to go on for about 2 years.

Allain asked what this has to do with the Wild & Scenic designation of the Myakka River.

Jono replied that this project would move hydroperiods to more historic levels below.

Marlene asked if a study has been done on what chance that the aquifer will be contaminated by doing this.

Don Ellison replied that there has been. The goal is to eject lightly treated surface water. The water needs to meet drinking water quality standards. The naturally occurring coliform is the only one they have to contend with and it is not necessarily dangerous. This bacteria has been studied extensively in Australia and at USF. The City of North Port is doing an ASR project and putting water into their aquifer storage and recovery well. They are not detecting the coliform bacteria, which is an indicator bacteria. If there is oil, grease or gas, then the project is off.

Bill questioned if the problem was too much pumping of ground water that is used for agriculture, why not address the source of the problem rather figuring out how to get rid of the excess through such a process with taxpayers paying to put it back.

Lisann responded that it is not just ground water withdrawal but other sources too. She gave an example of natural habitat cleared for crops stating that this decreases evapotranspiration rates and increases streamflow. The modeling shows build out for that area is low density residual which will also produce excess water but with a different seasonality.

Jono added that Bill is right, the fact is there were no laws in place to protect the Flatford Swamp back when these uses were allowed. Now is too difficult to change the laws. It is too difficult to require the vegetation to be put back or limit water use permits. So, they are trying to do a fix and intercept the water to put it back in the ground in order resolve the problem.

Discussion continued regarding the issues with excess water, water use permits, and existing WMD efforts to have solutions to these problems.

Draft Unit Management Plan (UMP) Review

Jono mentioned that on March 2, 2017 at the Suncoast Community Church Activity Center, there will be an open house meeting relating to the draft UMP for Myakka River State Park (MRSP) at 5 pm. On March 3, 2017, there will be an advisory group meeting. Public comment will be allowed at both meetings but a court reporter will be at the March 2, 2017 meeting so public comment would be more effective at that meeting. Comments can also be submitted by email, phone or regular mail until March 16, 2017. Jono will be representing the MRMCC and he would like input from the members on the stance on different areas of the draft UMP.

The proposed language is MRSP is designated single-use in accordance with 253.034(2)a F. S. to provide “public outdoor recreation and other park-related uses”, which would replace language from the 2004 UMP that MRSP would “public outdoor recreation and conservation” as a designated single use of the property.

From page 7, “uses such as, water resource development projects, water supply projects, stormwater management projects, linear facilities and sustainable agriculture and forestry (other than those forest management activities specifically identified in this plan) are not consistent with this plan or the management purposes of the park.” Jono clarified that this means that cattle

and water supply development will not be moving forward in the park. They are required to consider secondary management by statute, however. "Timber harvesting, fuel and stump harvesting and palm or palmetto frond harvesting would be appropriate as additional sources of revenue since the draft would be compatible and not interfere with the primary purpose of resource based recreation and conservation." The former chief naturalist of the Florida State Park system is critical of this. With the exception of fishing, the parks have been non-consumptive for more than 80 years and allowing people to take stuff out for profit is contrary to that. Former chief biologist for the Florida park service said that park staff have gone through all potential uses and refused them all and the same could be done at Myakka.

If it is more than 1,000 acres, then timber management assessments are required. In 2014, work was done on timber management issues that would be reevaluated at this time. A former Park Specialist said that an area of North Florida slash (pines) were removed. It is best to remove them young because if they are left to mature they are going to produce seeds and then more North Florida slash pines would have to be dealt with. In Myakka, these pines are so widely scattered that it would not be profitable for a timber company to harvest them.

On stump removal, they are a non-renewable resource which provides significant wildlife value. Jonathan Dickinson and Lake Kissimmee State Parks have denied the harvest of stumps deeming it inappropriate.

No justification was provided for the removal of palm fronds. This practice weakens the tree and reduces their roles for wildlife. Getting to the site and removing them creates impacts and compromises the aesthetics and health of the tree so that should be removed.

Jono stated that harvesting the stumps and cutting the fronds reduces the habitat value and most of the pines have already been dealt with so doing those things is not about improving the resources. Manatee and Sarasota Counties are already sending \$35 million a year to Tallahassee as part of the doc stamp transactions and some of the money is coming back and helping management at Myakka River State Park. Adjustments to seasonal camping rates or rates for large RVs would bring in far more dollars to the park than these limited harvests proposed. This is about establishing a premise that it is appropriate to take natural resources from the park and converting those exported resources into private dollars.

There is concern about the fire interval, the impacts of widening the fire lanes and impacts on wildlife.

At the South entrance, there is a proposal to add a tollbooth and tram to take people to Upper Myakka Lake (UML). They want the visitor center to be relocated from the South entrance to the UML area, remove the old concession building. There is a concern that the Myakka Wild & Scenic River (MWSR) Management Plan says that "Any manmade or man-induced artifact that provides a visual impact to or impairment of the otherwise natural setting within the viewshed of the Myakka River is considered to be aesthetically offensive." It is possible that adding all these facilities adjacent to the lake is contrary to the (MWSR) plan. Another concern is that by moving the visitor center, people have to drive half-way through the park to find out what the

opportunities are. During high water periods, parts of the park are closed so the interpretive center would be inaccessible if it was at the UML.

Jono briefly discussed the optimum boundary section of the UMP and that the Stop Camp may be converted to an eco-lodge before the topic moved back to Council business (prior to losing a quorum).

Chris noted in the by-laws and statute there is language that encourages specific type of membership on the Council. There are agencies that are statutorily designated including the FDEP, WMD and the local municipalities. Environmental organizations, business organizations and agricultural organizations can be added at the Council's discretion through a nomination process. This can only be done at the first meeting of each year. Currently there are no business or agricultural interests on the committee. There are 3 homeowners, there have been 4 in the past, so adding another homeowner could be considered.

Steven Schaeffer asked if any interest has been shown from an agricultural or business group.

Chris replied that the O Bar O Ranch has expressed interest. Chuck Johnston, the ranch manager, has attended a couple recent meetings.

Jono asked how everyone felt about adding the ranch.

(The topic was switched back to the officer elections and Chris summarized the election process from the adopted bylaws.)

Lee Amos nominated Jono Miller as chair, Marlene Guffey seconded. No other nominations were made. Jono was voted chair unanimously.

Steven nominated Jim Beever as co-chair, Tim Walker seconded. No other nominations were added. Jim was voted co-chair unanimously.

(Discussion returned to potential new Council nominees)

The Council voted unanimously to approach O Bar O Ranch for membership.

Lee suggested Thomas Ranch.

Discussion occurred about Thomas Ranch noting that Marty Black currently represents the ranch and has served on the Council for the City of Venice in the past.

The Council voted unanimously to approach Thomas Ranch for membership.

Tara asked about Mosaic's interest in joining the Council.

Chris replied that nomination was reviewed by the legal department in Tallahassee and, because of the heavy level of regulation, the nomination was not confirmed.

Lee also suggested the consideration of the concessionaire at Snook Haven (Park).

There was discussion and a consensus could not be reached. Jono suggested a motion be made.

Motion:

Lee Amos motioned to send an invitation to the concessionaire at Snook Haven to the serve on the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council. Greg Blanchard seconded. The Motion failed.

Marlene suggested the manufactured home associations South of U.S.41 on the East side of the river be approached about serving on the Council.

Mike added that they do not own the property on the river, they are leasing it and if properties on the river are going to be added they should be land owners.

Steven added that different perspectives should be allowed to serve on the Council to educate the other members and add a different viewpoint.

Discussion continued regarding the best make-up of the Council. Then discussion returned to the draft UMP for MRSP.

Jono summarized the main concerns in the draft UMP as: (1) allowing the harvest of natural resources that belong to the public for sale to private parties – people view this a change in the perspective. Then there are questions about (2) increasing development at the Upper Lake, and (3) the idea of putting an eco-lodge at the Stop Camp in the wilderness area. If I had to pick just a few things, this would be the biggest.

Diana Donaghy brought up that part of the stump discussion during planning (for UMP development) with the goal of meeting natural resource objectives – I think here for restoration. That is the portion that is missing from the harvesting language. If you fight against it completely then you may be hampering efforts to restore. She then suggested more specific language for when you can use those types of tools, as opposed to just commercial gain.

Jono said he did not think anyone has said that the park should be prohibited from removing stumps or North Florida Slash pine. I think what people were objecting to the finding that we are going to do it for financial reasons.

Diana replied that she believed that verbiage is in the section for restoration of natural habitats.

Jono read (from the Draft UMP) “it was determined that these activities would be appropriate as additional sources of revenue” noting it does not say it was determined these activities will improve the land management.

Diana added that the language indicates only as compatible with natural resource management.

She suggested to take out “sources of revenue” but keep in for the primary purpose of resources based conservation.

Jono asked Diana if there is any known natural resource objective by removing palm fronds.

Diana responded no, not commercially based amount or for sale.

Marlene stated that our state park can support themselves other ways besides harvesting our resources.

Diana noted that there are times when stump removal does serve an ecological purpose in parks.

Chris Becker added that timber harvesting and roller chopping are consumptive but necessary tools to maintain the parks. He stated that the language here confuses the situation. In order to meet our desired future conditions in the plan, we need these tools to get the job done.

Steven stated that the focus here is that these activities would be appropriate as additional “sources of revenue”, but it should not be done for revenue – unless it is peripheral.

Steve Giguere – as part of revenue generation, when consumptive resources are taken out of the park. The money stays in the land use proceeds (fund) which goes back into the resource program for that park. It does not go to Tallahassee.

Jono replied that there are two sides to this. Someone pays the park to take a resource. They are taking that resource and making money. Taking the public resources and park’s landscape and exporting them, while some of the money is going into account for MRSP, some of that money goes to enriching private vendors. The reason why people are upset about this is because this has not been a part of earlier recent UMP updates, this is showing up first at Myakka. There are 174 park units, people feel like allowing this at Myakka is not simply impacting Myakka but setting a precedent for this sort of thing. There is not a lot of money to be made by these activities with fronds and stumps or even with North Florida slash pine. You would have to wait ten years for them to be big enough to be merchantable. Even then not much money would come to the park.

Discussion continued on historic timbering practices at the park.

Bob brought up the draft UMP language about harvesting and read aloud the section on page 7; “For this park, it was determined that timber harvesting, fuel and stump harvesting, and palm or palmetto frond harvesting could be accommodated in a manner that would be compatible and not interfere with the primary purpose of resource-based outdoor recreation and conservation.” Bob then stated even in this (language) there is an implication that this is not in primary interest of the park. It is to accommodate another interest to do something for a profit in the park. He then moved to authorize Jono to advocate for not including this language in the plan or any other language against the primary purpose of the park.

Discussion continued on the topic of profit from park resources.

Jono stated that by saying that it is “additional sources of revenues”, it does not sound like it is offsetting costs, it sounds like it’s allowing outside people to come in and make money off public resources.

Elizabeth proposed that the language be modified by deleting the part about “additional sources of revenue” and changing the following sentence to “would be appropriate at this park as compatible with the parks primary purpose of resource based outdoor recreation and conservation. If these activities result in revenue generation, such revenue shall be used for land management in the same park.”

Juliette replied that you do not want to open the door and set a precedent for outside companies to come in and make money from park resources.

Jono added that it also opens the door for people to start taking things like Spanish moss that have no effect on the resource management objectives.

Marlene suggested that a vote be taken to see who is in favor of harvesting resources from the park and who is not.

Discussion continued to motion language on the issue. Lee Amos proposed a motion.

Motion:

The Myakka River Management Coordinating Council directs Jono Miller to work with park service staff to wordsmith sections of the management plan in order to limit consumptive sources of revenue to those that are consistent with the ecological health of the park’s natural resources.

Allain Hale seconded.

Discussion continued on the motion. The motion failed.

Motion:

The Myakka River Management Coordinating Council directs Jono Miller to advocate for no harvesting activities as an additional revenue source for the park.

Bob Clark made the motion and Marlene Guffey seconded. The motion passed.

Steve Giguere requested that people come to the public hearing to voice their opinions.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.