

**MINUTES REPORT
DR/GR COMMITTEE
May 14, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brenda Brooks (Co-Chair)
Steven Brown
Phil Buchanan
Carie Call
Don Eslick
Richard Friday
Dennis Gilkey (Co-Chair)
Cullum Hasty (Co-Chair)

Kevin Hill
Jason Lauritsen
W. Kirk Martin
Scott McCaleb
Peggy Schmidt
Linda Tanner
Don Troyer

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Gibbs
Dawn Lehnert
Paul O'Connor
Wayne Daltry
Donna Hock, Recording Secretary

Additional staff was present in the audience.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order; Certification of Affidavit of Publication

Cullum Hasty, Co-Chair, opened the meeting. Dawn Lehnert, Assistant County Attorney presented the affidavit for the legal advertisement.

Agenda Item 2 –Approval of Minutes: April 23, 2008

Steven Brown moved to approve the minutes from April 23, 2008. Phil Buchanan seconded. Motion passed unanimously 15-0.

Agenda Item 3 – Public Input

None

Agenda Item 4 – Presentation by Robert Renken and Kevin J. Cunningham, U.S. Geological Survey, regarding proposed contract with Lee Division of Natural Resources to study wellfield protection in the DR/GR

Mary Gibbs, Director of Community Development, and Roland Ottolini, Director of the Division of Natural Resources, introduced Mr. Robert Renken and Mr. Kevin J. Cunningham. Mr. Ottolini explained to committee members the proposed contract is not a part of the DR/GR study being performed by Dover, Kohl and Partners. It stems from the recent updating of the Wellfield Protection ordinance, which prompted Commissioners to ask

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if the area around Lee County's wellfields could be affected by mining as in the recent investigation in the Lake Belt in Miami-Dade County. USGS investigated the movement of contaminants from mines to wellfields in Miami-Dade, and is proposing to do a similar study for Lee's wellfields in the DR/GR.

Mr. Renken noted the proposed work would not duplicate the existing land use contract with Dover Kohl & Partners, but could enhance the water modeling subcontract. He pointed out that land use and water issues in the DR/GR are linked. The purpose of the proposed USGS contract is to develop a conceptual hydrogeologic framework of the physical system – the natural “plumbing” of the DR/GR – to study groundwater flow from mines to wells and from well to well. The second purpose is to assess the susceptibility of the wellfields to contamination. The model will take into consideration the time it takes for water to travel and the distance it will travel under certain circumstances.

Kevin Cunningham discussed the work he did in the Miami-Dade area on the Biscayne Aquifer. This laid the foundation for conceptualizing how the porous system of limerock functions in the aquifer. This research led to the use of certain technologies that could also be helpful in the DR/GR study. This would include digital imaging, CT tomography and animated, “fly-through” modeling, which illustrates the movement of water.

Mr. Renken said the DR/GR study would be done in phases. Phase 1, estimated to cost about \$450,000, would produce a hydrogeologic framework and baseline water quality assessment. It would require the drilling of clustered monitoring wells to collect basic water quality and production data. In about 18 months, these wells should reveal useful information. A complete study would require five stages at an estimated cost of \$2.2 million, with USGS covering approximately 40 percent of the cost. The additional phases would include flow path assessment, environmental forensics for groundwater and surface water, and convergent tracer tests.

Dennis Gilkey asked whether this study would lead to proposals for set backs and regulatory issues for mines. Mr. Renken said those are policy issues that commissioners would determine. Mr. Ottolini said the information will be shared with Dover Kohl but was primarily aimed at use for reviewing wellfield protection issues.

Mssrs. Renken and Cunningham answered questions from the committee, including an inquiry from Mr. Hill regarding new technology developed since the Miami/Dade research project that could be useful in the proposed DR/GR study. Mr. Renken said new technology has developed better surrogates for the kinds of biological contaminants that tracer tests attempt to duplicate. For example, one of these surrogates is being used to mimic the patterns of cryptosporidium movement.

In response to a question from Linda Tanner, he verified that research in Miami/Dade suggested that groundwater in some areas was moving at a rate of 1,200 feet per day where the model was indicating that it moved at a rate of 15 feet per day.

In response to a question from Peggy Schmidt, Mr. Renken said all five phases would take four to five years.

Scott McCaleb asked for a copy of the USGS proposal, and Ms. Gibbs said it would be sent to all the committee members.

In response to a question from Mr. Hill, Mr. Renken said the monitoring wells would be drilled along known flowways and where the county can get the greatest use of information for other needs.

Sam Lee of the Division of Natural Resources introduced John Hughes of DHI, Inc., which is creating the combined surface water and groundwater model for the DR/GR as a subcontract of the Dover Kohl land use study. Hughes listened to the presentation via speaker phone. He said the DHI model would evaluate the effect of proposed land uses in the DR/GR on surface water and groundwater in Lee County. It could evaluate the impact on specific bodies of water, such as a river, or a specific area, such as the Green Meadows well field. The USGS study could help refine this model in the future with a better picture of karst features in the DR/GR.

Mary Gibbs said this presentation was brought to the committee as an informational item, to inform the committee of what commissioners are considering and clear up confusion on whether the two studies overlap.

Mr. Hill informed the committee that the University of Florida's Department of Food and Resource Economics, Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee, is doing a study on agricultural issues for water recharge within the DR/GR.

Mr. Hasty recognized audience member Tom Missimer, a Lee County hydrologist. He said that Lee County worked with the USGS from 1968 to '78 to study and map the aquifers of east Lee County. That information should still be available. He pointed out that 78 percent of US communities use surface water storage, including mine pits to store water for human use. Of those, 70 percent use standard water treatments to eliminate biological contaminants including cryptosporidium.

Agenda Item 5 – Committee Items and Discussion

Mr. Hasty asked the committee if they wanted to continue their regular schedule until the Dover Kohl report is issued. Committee members said they would like to hold their planned May 28 and June 11 meetings and then consider meeting more frequently in June or July, possibly with a day-long session or a series of weekly, half-day sessions.

Mary Gibbs asked the committee members if they have any preference for additional speakers. She also noted she would prefer to know as soon as possible so that they may be lined up possibly for the June meetings.

Mr. Gilkey asked Ms. Gibbs if she had the letter he emailed to her and if a copy would be provided to the committee members. Ms. Gibbs stated she will be passing out a copy of the email after the meeting.

Mr. Gilkey expressed concern with the preferred mining plan presented to the Board of County Commissioners on April 24, 2008. He feels that conflict has not been flushed out and factors, such as, community input, public involvement, and economic permitting should be a larger basis for decision on the Land Use. He would like to see the committee come to a point of working on and focusing on solutions to the conflicts. Mr. Steven Brown would like to see all the issues of conflict brought out onto the table. He stated the DR/GR is not about the mining exclusively. He would like to take discussion in some sort of compromise to ensure a preferred future for that area. There are some strong opinions about what the final solution should look like.

Ms. Gibbs clarified that she doesn't want anyone to prejudge what is coming out of the Dover Kohl study. They have to go back and refine the different areas to see what is feasible and what the existing problems are.

Brenda Brooks questioned if the flushing out of the issues has to be done in public forum. If so, how are they to accomplish that in a couple hours every other week? Ms. Lehnert suggested that they meet more frequently or for longer periods of time in order to engage in the conversations that need to be had and the county staff would be willing to facilitate to the extent needed.

Phil Buchanan would like to see a draft from Dover Kohl before the committee starts picking and choosing alternatives. He doesn't want to see parallel or separate tracks being taken from that of the consultants. He suggests working in concert with them.

Ms. Tanner would like the county to look into a microsurfacing company in lieu of using aggregate for many of the roads needing to be repaved in Lee County. She states it reduces the need of aggregate by 40-50%. The process would be used as a maintenance treatment. She explained advantages of the microsurfacing and explained that she emailed Ms. Gibbs the information.

Jason Lauritsen asked Ms. Gibbs what speakers are lined up for the June meetings. Ms. Gibbs responded that Mr. Howard Wegis with Lee County Utilities will be speaking on the long-term water supply plan on May 28th. Ms. Tanner suggested an employee of Florida Department of Transportation speak on the microsurfacing issue. There was a request for the traffic study and the 1999 South Florida water shed study. Mr. Hasty would like to present an eight minute presentation on the Bonita Springs flow way restoration project and Ms. Schmidt wanted a session on the issues and purpose of the committee. Additionally, Mr. Kirk Martin wanted to do a presentation on the effects of water levels. It was suggested by Mr. Hasty that Mr. Jim Beaver return with an example of a properly restored mine. Mr. Lauritsen would like another point of view on the restored mine issue and the loss of wetland function in the uphill areas with abandonment or restoration. The quality of the surrounding areas in

future mine pits needs to be addressed. It was suggested by some committee members that Dr. Weisskoff speak on the economic issues at hand.

Mr. Gilkey suggested a professional facilitator to help the committee come together on issues facing the committee. Ms Schmidt stated that someone has to gather the information and summarize it into what we have done and learned in all the meetings.

Linda Tanner made a motion to have Mr. Howard Wegis and Mr. Wayne Daltry speak at the next meeting on May 28, 2008 and to have Dr. Weisskoff speak at the following meeting on June 11, 2008. Mr. Buchanan amended the motion adding to have Mr. Jim Beaver speak at a future meeting. Discussion on the motion is as follows:

Brenda Brooks suggested that all speaker times be limited to 20 minutes with a question and answer session to follow. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Motion passes 15-0.

Linda Tanner made a motion to have a day long workshop on July 24, 2008 that will be 6-8 hours in duration. Dawn Lehnert explained during discussion that a date should not be set until all calendars have been checked for conflict. Mr. Hill would like to see the committee come up with recommendations sooner than the end of July and feels July would be too late for the workshop. Mr. Buchanan would rather see weekly half day meetings in July.

It was discussed by Mr. Hasty that the motion be withdrawn and tabled until the next meeting. The motion was withdrawn by Ms. Tanner.

Agenda Item 6 – Staff Items

Mary Gibbs reminded the committee members of the email sent to them regarding the workshop given by the County Attorneys office on July 26. Discussion will include The Sunshine Law and disclosures as well as other matters.

Agenda Item 7 – Public Input

None

Agenda Item 8– Adjourn Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Next regular meeting: May 28, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. in the Community Development/Public Works Building, 1500 Monroe Street, Fort Myers

A full audio recording of the meeting can be heard at http://lee-county.com/dcd/CommunityPlans/SELC_DRGR/MeetingInfo.htm

Copies of power point presentations, handouts and reports mentioned in the minutes can be obtained at

http://lee-county.com/dcd/CommunityPlans/SELC_DRGR/ReportsRelatedDocs.htm