

Rivers Coalition

## Meeting Minutes: November 19, 2020

Jim Moir Called the ZOOM Meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

Members in attendance: 50+ people were present on ZOOM Call.

Chairman's Comments: Jim Moir chaired the meeting due to Mark Perry's illness.

The condition of the River is "awful."

Encouraged all to sign onto the Friends of Everglades "Fix the Flo" Petition.

No December RC Meeting.

January Meeting speaker will be Tim Gysen of USACOE.

Presentation: Jim Introduced Greg Braun, Executive Director of Guardians of Martin County.

The Guardians have been RC members for many years.

Greg Braun presentation is on Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative.

You can see the ZOOM meeting recording and PPT at RC website: <http://riverscoalition.org>

Greg would like RC BOD sign a letter of support for this Loxa-Lucie Initiative.

Charles Grande proposes that Greg write a draft letter and Rivers Coalition will put it on out letterhead.

Also any RC organizational member can take this presentation to their BODs for their support.

Martin County Report: Katie Bowes spoke for Dianne Hughes who was ill. PDT meeting tomorrow.

Katie commented on the coral program, the water is at 33 ppt parts per thousand which is detrimental to coral. Lt Col Kelly of USCOE told her that it will be another 2-3 months of discharges. Eve Samples voiced concern that USCOE is not using best data on algal blooms.

Jim Moir announced that Eve Samples is now on Rivers Coalition Board of Directors. All were muted on ZOOM but looked very pleased about that.

City of Stuart: Discussion with Merritt Matheson on using Stuart City Hall in 2021 for RC mtgs.

Jim Moir mentioned the RC BOD will continue 6 months of RC ZOOM Mtgs.

Monday December 14<sup>th</sup> Merritt has asked the USCOE to come to City Hall Meeting. They will speak approximately at 5:30 P.M.

Ben Hogarth said the Blue/Green Task Force's task is to help USCOE to come up with better info on fighting Algae Blooms. PDT tomorrow to find "alternative Schedules" to give USCOE. We have had "Biblical" rainfall lately but if there is a dry period then we need to give the river/estuary a "breather."

Jim Moir asks if we shouldn't just "blow it out" and dump the water so the river can recover.

Blair Wickstrom says we should look at the big picture and ask "How can we send water south, instead of to us?" We need to get the Lake level to 11 ft at June 1<sup>st</sup>. We need to focus on NO discharges to the estuary.

JTL reminded us that the STA's are all full from 1 million acre feet of EAA water so there is no room to send more south. She said that legally STA's were built for the EAA.

SFWMD: Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch said that we changed the culture of SFWMD by infiltrating it. These B/G Task Forces and other things would not have happened if we were not in their faces.

We can't send water through S-333 via Shark River Slough because it would flood 8.5 square mile area that was squatted on in the 1980's by Miami. Now there are 300 homes there. They need to be bought out so we can send water there.

JTL said we need to talk to Gayle Harrell, Toby Overdorf and John Snyder who are now in the new State Legislative Session which started two days ago.

Greg Braun said this only reiterates the need for water storage such as Loxa-Lucie purchase.

Lake O Update: Dr. Paul Gray had to get back to Blue/Green Task Force ZOOM meeting but took a few minutes to say that the Lake O level is a problem. There is too much water in the Lake. If the water level stays high then we will have an algae problem next summer. We need to reduce the Lake, it naturally doesn't drop until March. There is a Periodic Scientist Call next week.

#### Coalition Reports:

*River Kidz:* Nic Mader said to get the word out to use the RK workbook on the RC website. Haven't been able to print it yet due to COVID in schools.

*Speaker Bureau:* Todd W. said Speakers Bureau is open for business.

#### Local Issues & Estuary Water Quality:

FOS Water Quality Report the water quality is D-, POOR.

*Seagrass Update:* Jim Moir said we need to press SFWMD to get the seagrass surveys done.

JTL said that they won't do them until seagrasses are growing again.

Indian Riverkeeper: Mike Conner said he has had conversations with Drew Bartlett of SFWMD.

We need salt in the estuary. IRL is 60 miles long. Mike is going to Titusville where there is a horrific bloom. There is Nano plankton from Melbourne to New Smyrna. Taylor Creek is outting out an "astronomical" amount of dirty water. Jensen Beach North is turbid due to the tannins and wind. Indian River Drive was rebuilt with bad soil so the sediment kills any seagrass.

Indian Riverkeeper is doing fundraising on the website [www.THEIndianriverkeeper.org](http://www.THEIndianriverkeeper.org)

#### Member Comments and Announcements:

Eve Samples announced an evening with Carl Hiassen and Maggie Hurchalla December 8<sup>th</sup> 5:30-6:30 \$25.00 (free to Marjorie's Circle members).

Jim thanked Greg Braun/JTL/Mike Conner/Barbara Osborn/State and Federal Representatives for all they do.

Next RC meeting January 28, 2021 11:00 via ZOOM.

Adjourned 12:45 p.m.