

**SOUTH MIAMI DADE WATERSHED STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Fourteen**

August 28, 2003  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Report of Proceedings**

**WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was held at the National Park Service South Florida Ecosystem Office in Homestead and was sponsored by Committee Member Robert Johnson, Everglades National Park. Charles Thibos, representative on the Committee from Tropical Everglades Visitor Association, sponsored breakfast and lunch through his business, the Everglades Alligator Farm. Both members were thanked for sponsoring the day's facility, and food & refreshments.

Roger Carlton, Chair, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting by introducing prospective new member Subrata Basu, who has taken the position of Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning for Miami Dade County, which was vacated upon the retirement of former Committee member, Lee Rawlinson. Mr. Basu will be taking Mr. Rawlinson's place on the Committee. Mr. Basu spoke briefly to the Committee praising the work they have accomplished and pledging his continued support of the process. Mr. Carlton also introduced Howard Nelson, prospective new member representing the building industry, who will replace Lester Goldstein. Committee members then introduced themselves to Mr. Basu and Mr. Nelson.

Members Present:

Roger Carlton, Chair  
Richard Alger, South Florida Potato Growers Exchange  
Humberto Alonso, SFWMD  
Daniel Apt, Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Subrata Basu, Miami-Dade DP&Z  
Linda Canzanelli, Biscayne National Park  
Carlos Espinosa, Miami Dade DERM  
Jeffrey Flanagan, Chamber South  
Dick Frost, Tropical Audubon Society  
April Gromnicki, National Audubon Society  
Robert Johnson, Everglades National Park  
Louise King, Redland Citizen's Association  
William Losner, Greater Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce  
Bennie Lovett, Florida City  
Howard Nelson, Building Industry Representative  
Reed Olszack, Miami-Dade Agricultural Practices Board  
Blanca Mesa, Sierra Club  
Lawrence Percival, Kendall Federation of Homeowner Associations  
Jorge Rodriguez, Miami-Dade Water & Sewer Department  
Mike Shehadeh, City of Homestead  
Charles Thibos, Tropical Everglades Visitor Association  
Julia Trevarthen, South Florida Regional Planning Council

## **AGENDA REVIEW/CHAIR COMMENTS**

The Facilitator, Janice Fleischer, went over the day's agenda.

The objectives of the meeting:

- Project Manager's Report
- Consultant Report
- Review of Task 1 Presentations

A copy of the Objectives and Agenda are attached as Exhibit A.

Ms. Fleischer quickly reviewed the contents of the meeting packet, and the Committee's Discussion Guidelines, consensus rules, and process for public comment. All Reports of Proceedings of the Committee, Discussion Guidelines and Committee related information, can be found on the SFRPC website at [www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm](http://www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm).

Mr. Carlton informed members that he had formally thanked former member and representative of one of the signatories to the Watershed MOU, Lee Rawlinson of Miami Dade Planning and Zoning, by presenting him with a plaque on behalf of the Committee in appreciation of his tireless work and dedication to the Committee.

Mr. Carlton addressed the consultant Scope of Services (SOS) that had been discussed at the last meeting. Some members had felt there was not enough time to fully review the SOS during that meeting. Mr. Carlton encouraged any Members with questions for clarification to contact Project Manager John Hulsey for more information. The Scope of Services is not included here as an exhibit to conserve paper, but can be accessed at the Council's website: [www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm](http://www.sfrpc.com/institute/watershed.htm) under "Scope of Services".

As a last item, Mr. Carlton informed members that Miami-Dade County requires all members of its committees to be residents of the County unless a waiver is issued by the County Commission. He noted that a blanket waiver of the residency requirement was being prepared to be taken to the Commission for approval. If anyone's address has changed since the inception of the Committee, Mr. Carlton asked that Cindy Dwyer be notified.

## **PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT**

The meeting was then turned over to the Project Manager, John Hulsey for his Project Manager's Report. (Exhibit B). Mr. Hulsey reported on activities taken with Keith and Schnars as well as activities within the South Florida Regional Planning Council related to and furthering the Watershed Study. Many of these activities had to do with the formation and first meeting of the Technical Review Committee.

Mr. Hulsey also presented a summary of the Technical Review Committee's (TRC) first meeting (Exhibit C). Mr. Hulsey began by explaining that the current status of the Watershed Study is understanding how we get to a baseline, a point in time for which we have a "snap shot" of data to describe the state of the study area. The Consultant's activities have been concentrated on retrieving data and reviewing existing studies to reach that understanding. The purpose of the TRC meeting was to review and comment on Consultant's (Keith and Schnars) methods of performing those tasks. Among the more general comments from the TRC to the Consultant were: 1) the need to "tell the story" of the watershed area in a way to which the general public can relate; 2) to make sure the public has an opportunity to express their values and concerns prior to the sub-task during which parameters and thresholds will be chosen; 3) the need to show how the study will connect the impacts of activities on the land to the

condition of Biscayne Bay; and 4) to better describe how the individual sub-tasks will result in a holistic, cohesive vision for the future of the study area. Exhibit C includes the individual comments from the TRC about each of the sub-tasks.

Committee members responded with the following comments:

1. Property rights issues need to be included in TRC deliberations; impact of 1 lot per 5 acres
2. 3 scenarios being considered at present:
  - a. Urban Development Boundary (UDB) can be moved
  - b. UDB can be moved and innovative planning policies implemented
  - c. UDB can not be moved; population projections taken into consideration
3. How does TRC work together with other studies re: Biscayne Bay and minimum flows and levels;
  - a. This affects where reuse is done;
  - b. There is a need to get coordination done
4. Important that TRC know how much work has already been done which has concluded that Biscayne Bay must get better; the language has to be more direct than “let’s not make it worse”
5. What is needed is a really good independent base line; internal / external / entropy (natural state of decay)

## **CONSULTANT REPORT**

Following Mr. Hulsey’s presentation, a presentation was made by the Consultant, Keith & Schnars (Exhibit D). Michael Davis, Vice President of Keith & Schnars updated the Committee on its public outreach efforts, and enlisted the Committee members’ help in reaching out to their constituencies. Additionally, Committee members were asked to preview a powerpoint presentation which will be used to inform the general public of the process. It was decided that in the future all references to the Committee would use the acronym “WSAC”.

Committee members contributed the following comments concerning the powerpoint and other items:

1. It is the responsibility of all WSAC members to keep their constituency informed and be in attendance at public meetings
2. Consider residents that are outside Watershed study area since they are possibly affected
3. Public notice suggestion: Inserts could be put in with other regularly mailed materials

The floor was opened to Public Comment.

## **TASK 1 PRESENTATIONS**

Eric Silva, Ian Miller, and Juan Carrizo of Keith & Schnars proceeded with a series of presentations regarding Task 1 and its relevant subtasks (Exhibit E). After each presentation, Committee members filled out feedback forms (Exhibits F1-F11) and engaged in discussion, followed by a public comment before moving on to the next presentation. A working lunch was provided midway through the presentations. Comments received during these presentations follow:

General Context of Study Components, Committee comments:

1. Biscayne Bay interest should be only one consideration of the scenarios
2. 2 parts – “story” and “study” – should be broken up into 2 presentations. The “story” refers to the past... how did we get here.
3. May have too much detail for public that has not been involved, do it more on a “feelings” level
4. Consider both Biscayne National Park & Biscayne Bay

5. Cost Benefit Analysis – needs to be presented as tool, not the deciding factor
6. Answer for public – “What’s at stake?” “Why should I care?” “What can I do?”
7. Sustainability is key word; another scenario should be sustainability
8. Is the goal building consensus as per slides, or information?
9. Video is an attention getter – include panorama of development at its worst; i.e. West Kendall
10. Seems like focus on Biscayne Bay is lost; don’t lose sight; make presentation simpler
11. Clarify what final result will be
12. Be careful with your words
13. Need people, evidence of habitation, in video and presentation
14. Don’t try to tell them everything
15. Acknowledge policymakers make final decisions; WSAC makes recommendations
16. Best Management Practices could potentially be changed to accommodate growth and agriculture
17. Show zones. Development zone is growing; how do we deal with that?
18. Have pictures of people and critters; balance of environment and land rights

Public Comment re: General Presentation

1. 4<sup>th</sup> scenario = sustainability
2. Need people in presentation; no recognition of housing; WSAC mission statement seems disconnected from other material; balance; more dense development
3. Presentation seemed skewed; page 13, slide 2 is very unclear

Task 1.1 – Relevant Studies, Committee Comments:

1. Does not contain private / public sector development and absorption studies; needs to be more inclusive
2. Get info from 3 report groups of WSAC - economy, agriculture, environment – to the consultant

Task 1.2 – Population Growth, Committee Comments:

1. Emphasize importance of tremendous population growth
2. Concerns about population projections:
  - a. Is population growth really organic and unpredictable – this creates a feeling of not being able to stop it
  - b. Need to consider that it can be controlled by public policy
3. Images have more impact than charts; use graphs; how to show population projections in way folks can understand
4. Traffic needs (transportation), especially in Kendall community; places to recreate: community parks; schools
5. The two models used now differ radically; one is policy driven (county); look at assumptions on other models and see if they are appropriate re: population growth (they are based on many public policies)
6. Although we have two national parks, they are limited in what people can do in them (wilderness regulations)
7. This is not as much about growth, but about its impact on the Watershed and water issues; managing growth within a watershed (% of open space; % of permeable areas; what areas should be low density; what mitigation strategies)
8. Goal not only to present options, but to persuade policy makers of appropriate growth strategies

Public Comment re: Task 1.2

1. Tourism numbers need to be included in population growth

Task 1.3 – Development Features, Committee comments:

1. Discussion re: water quality in parks / Outstanding Florida Waters and baselines
2. Homestead study on population growth has newer stats

Task 1.4 – Natural / Wildlife Resources, Committee Comments:

1. Need definition of “natural community” –
  - a. is there one?
  - b. Which are safe?
  - c. Which are at risk?
  - d. Which are near demise?
2. Reference to historical resources, to parks... why were these parks created... to protect species

Public Comment re: Task 1.4

1. Concern with timing; some may not get the time they need
2. What are we talking about in this inventory... biology, species, lands, ground water?
3. Look at geology of area

Task 1.5 – Water Resources, Committee Comment:

1. Projects – Wastewater Reuse Pilot Project; other CERP projects which will reduce groundwater in area
2. Is Bay part of model re: estuaries?; there has been some concern re: models with Bay and estuaries
3. Is the DERM model the right model to use? Need more info and consensus
4. Include Interior Dept. in this; how do you build topographic model so you can see where groundwater is at any point in the Watershed?
5. Comprehensive Integrated Water Quality Feasibility Study
6. Incorporate impaired waters list?
7. Homestead study results should be incorporated
8. Are we looking at pre-CERP or post-CERP condition?
9. This is only a storm water base routing model; not the same as regional water depths over the long term; this is only a short storm period model

Task 1.6 – Regulatory and Planning Agency Jurisdictions, Committee Comments:

1. Will recommendations be made to agencies re: their regulations?
2. Does the WSAC want to make recommendations to agencies?
3. Need enlightened regulation
4. Use “one-stop” permitting as example; delegation of authority through intergovernmental agreements
5. Refer to Governor’s Commission for a Sustainable South Florida recommendations regarding permitting

Task 1.7 – Land Inventory and Ownership Characteristics, Committee Comments:

1. Involve property owners in this process; need to update list of those notified of meetings, etc.
2. Will land sustainability study be done here? (not clear how this differs from Task 1.3)
3. Land sustainability is part of Task 2
4. May need another adjective in “significant parcels” so that it doesn’t exclude the environment

General Comments by Committee after the Presentations were complete:

1. Concern over balance of representation on Committee
2. Still need more info on the three scenarios selected; committee not completely comfortable
3. None of the scenarios allow for new progressive policies
4. Actually, current policies are pretty forward-thinking but are not used
5. Scenario 2 can be addressed as a “2” and “2b” to incorporate new and innovative policies

Public Comment:

List of permitted uses are not being taken advantage of by developers; final recommendations should include innovations in planning around the country

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Chair commented on the need for continuing the Committee’s education on the variety of complex matters surrounding the Watershed, and that perhaps presentations could be given on relevant watershed projects around the nation. Ms. Fleischer replied that there are a number of similar projects around the country, and that a good amount of information was available via the internet.

The Chair also commented on the need for the Technical Review Committee to be informed of the results of this meeting, and perhaps have representatives at future WSAC meetings. He then closed the meeting with a congratulatory note to Committee members for an excellent and productive meeting.

Ms. Fleischer thanked members for their participation and asked them to turn in their Evaluation Forms. She reminded members that the next meeting would be on September 25, 2003 and asked that anyone wishing to sponsor facilities and/or food for that meeting to contact her.

## **COMMENT CARDS RECEIVED:**

Re: Future public meetings: Why is this only addressed south of Kendall? What about mid-county as well, secondary study area especially? We are all interested in the Watershed. It is all about our bay, our water. It is not just south of Kendall; it should be all of Dade, don’t you think? Our group believes in an inclusive public process. – Nancy Lee, Urban Environment League

RE: Scenario on General Presentation: How about a scenario 4 focused on sustainability, like the Keys are doing now? All of the scenarios assume unlimited growth. What about studying how much growth in this particular area can be sustained by the resources, then increase growth in the urban core and keep growth in the Watershed to sustainable levels. –Nancy Lee, Urban Environment League

Re: Task 1.1: Report should include studies of how sprawl effects quality of life and financial impact to community. Report should compare communities that fuel sprawl vs. those that discourage it. Report should analyze financial impacts to established suburbs and urban areas as funds are used to subsidize new suburbs. Jon Ullman, Sierra Club.

Re: Population Projections: We have a revolving population of tourists throughout the year; are the population projections considering tourist numbers? They use our resources and impact the environment. -Nancy Lee, Urban Environment League

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was then adjourned.