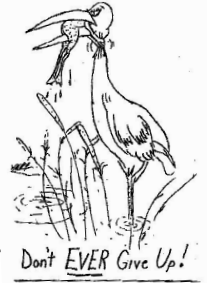


TOOFAR NEWS



Protecting & Conserving Our Water

March 2007 Volume 184

TOOFAR Inc
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Office Hours
Tues, Weds, Thurs 10-3

Our website: www.toofarinc.com

Meeting Notices

TOOFAR General Meeting
Thursday March 22 at 7pm
East Citrus Community Center
Speaker: Mr. Mike Bartlett
Structure Control Supervisor
SWFWMD

TOOFAR Board Meeting
Thursday April 5 at 6pm
TOOFAR office

Citrus County Task Force
March 12 at 2pm
Lecanto Government Bldg.

Withlacoochee Basin Board
April 12, 2007
at 9 am
Brooksville

Water Conservation Summit
March 23, 2007
Hilton Ocala Hotel
(info: call 800-423-1476 ext 610)

SWFWMD Governing Board
March 27
at 9 am
Brooksville

Citrus County Commissioners
County Courthouse
March 13 & 27
at 1pm

Sumter County Commissioners
March 13 & 27
at the Courthouse, Bushnell
March 20 at Laurel Manor
in the Villages
All meetings at 5 pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Al Grubman presented the following to the Citrus County Task Force of the Citrus/Hernando Water Restoration Council at their February 12, 2007 meeting.

A Kingdom of Lakes, Rivers and Springs

Once upon a time in a beautiful country kingdom, a wise legislator realized that the Royal Technical Agencies who were skilled and educated did not serve the wants and needs of the people. With growth, private misdeeds and errors by the Royal Engineers the lakes became clogged, fouled and were emptying. The wise legislator worked to gather and appoint a council that included common persons and Royal Technical Agencies. The wisdom of the common people could be combined with the education and knowledge of the Royal Technical Agencies. Working together would achieve serendipity and restore the waters to clean and plentiful beauty. In the wisdom of the legislator, the common people would speak of the problems and needs followed by the technical agencies proposing solutions and recommendations. But alas, it did not work. Royal Technical Agencies rarely suggested anything but ignored or found fault with the ideas of the common people. The Royal Technical Agencies proposed that vast riches be spent on studies. Work was rarely started because studies were rarely finished. If a study was finished and ended with alternatives, discussion could go on forever. The common people begged for help and the Royal Technical Agencies picked at ideas and offered useless trials and more study.

Will the kingdom suffer a revolt?

Will the commoners march on local palaces?

Will the commoners march on the Flying Eagle lowlands with saws and pruning hooks to allow wet season waters to flow into the lakes?

Will the commoners march to stop scheduled releases of water from the lakes?

Or will the kingdom live happily ever after with citizens, Royal Technical Agencies and legislators working together?

TOOFAR MISSION STATEMENT

A grassroots organization dedicated to the best management and conservation of natural resources for present and future generations through public education and interaction with all entities charged with these responsibilities

HILITES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING

By Pat Brady

Thanks to Jerri Regan for supplying the goodies and manning the coffee room. Thanks to Pat Johnson for helping.

Al Grubman called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge followed by the Invocation. Minutes of previous meetings as well as Board Meeting Minutes are available in the TOOFAR Office. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as read subject to audit.

Doug Leeper, Environmental Scientist, SWFWMD gave a brief overview of what his department does and provided a description of minimum flows and levels. Levels are set because they are required by state law to protect the water resources from over use. Flows are established for flowing water systems and levels for standing bodies of water. We are impacting the water in many ways, fertilizers, and roadways and especially overuse of water. Reports on individual water bodies are available at <http://www.watermatters.org>

John Parker, Water Regulation Manager, SWFWMD illustrated minimum flows and levels with a few examples: a) Minimum lake level must be set to prevent "significant" harm. SWFWMD is looking at Lake Winona near the Villages in Sumter County. The long term average model shows a loss of about 2.5 feet since pre-development time. In the long run Lake Winona would drop below the minimum flow by the draw downs that are occurring now. b) The Lake Weir graph shows significant pumping effect in diverging trends between lake, aquifer and rainfall. c) The St John's water district believes our aquifer supply will not meet the growth needs of Florida and are pushing for the development of surface water development. Questions and answers were followed by a short break.

Dave Starnes – Lake Panasoffkee Report – May 5th Lake Panasoffkee restoration celebration. He invited TOOFAR to have a booth and encouraged members to attend.

President's report – Jan 27th Greg & Al participated in Citrus 20/20 Vision 2007. We need to be closely associated with every group in the county that has concerns for our water. 20/20 is key and we made sure TOOFAR's position was heard.

Al attended the Citrus County task force meeting. We believe that the new chairman is a positive force for change and we want to help them move ahead. They have a public input forum coming up on May 19. The Council wants the public to attend the First Annual Stakeholders Conference to tell them what we want. (See box below for more information)

Bullfrog drawing - \$48 Nina Gilbert. Motion to adjourn, 2nd passed.

Wanted: Citizen Input

The Citrus County Task Force of the Citrus/Hernando Restoration Council wants to know what you think. The task force's Saturday May 19th meeting from 9 am—1 pm at the Citrus Springs Community Center will provide a forum for citizen input regarding water restoration projects that citizens believe are needed in Citrus County. This is our chance to repeat our concerns such as muck removal, berm removal and upland vegetation. Please attend this important meeting and let our representatives hear our concerns. Information about this meeting will be posted on the web at: <http://www.mgcenvironmental.com/WaterwaysConference.htm> Call SWFWMD at 800-423-1476 ext.4227 for information regarding Task Force meetings. We'll update our website as information becomes available: www.toofarinc.com

Hold March 31, 2007 for TOOFAR's Member Appreciation Picnic

Join the fun at Hernando Park from 11 am—3 pm on March 31, 2007. TOOFAR provides buns, hot dogs and hamburgers with the fixings. You provide a dish to pass and your beverages. If you already let us know you're coming—thanks! If not, please call 726-5004 to let us know if you and other family members will be there. Please RSVP. (Note: site changed from Inverness to Hernando due to boat races)

Want to Know More about Florida's Most Precious Resource? Read On

The following was taken from a water resources manual entitled Florida Waters, published by Florida's Water Management Districts.

The Water Cycle

"The water on earth is continuously circulating between the air or atmosphere, the land and the sea. The ways in which the water moves around, above, on and within the Earth is the hydrologic or water cycle.

The sun is the energy source for the water cycle, causing water to evaporate from lakes, rivers, and oceans, as well as from land surfaces and vegetation. When water evaporates, it changes to a gas (water vapor) and rises in the air. When the water vapor rises and meets cold air, it condenses, forming water droplets, or what we see as clouds or fog. This process is called condensation. Water droplets combine into water drops and return to the Earth as precipitation in the form of rain, sleet, hail, or snow...."

"Some rain is absorbed by plants or evaporates before it reaches the ground. Some evaporates after it hits the ground. Some soaks into the ground and is taken up by the roots of plants and then released back into the air through the process of transpiration.... Some rain soaks beneath the water table into underground units of water-bearing rock called aquifers. The remainder becomes surface or stormwater runoff that flows over the ground to wetlands, lakes, ponds, rivers and oceans." (Pages 36-37)

Florida's Water Cycle

"Florida's water cycle includes the flow of surface and ground water from Georgia and Alabama into northern and northwestern Florida as well as outflows to the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. Hydrologist Garald Parker was the first to discover that neither surface water nor ground water crosses a line snaking across the peninsula from Cedar Key on the Gulf to New Smyrna Beach on the Atlantic (Betz 1984). This line is known as the hydrologic divide. South of the hydrologic divide, Florida is an island as far as fresh water is concerned: It totally depends on rainfall for its fresh water, including ground water stored in aquifers. North of the hydrologic divide, Florida receives water from outside the state." (Page 37)

Florida's Water Resources

"Florida is, indeed, blessed with water. Yet you can't see most of Florida's fresh water: it seeps beneath the ground through sand and gravel and flows through cracks and channels in underlying limestone. The amount of ground water under Florida's forests, pastures, cities, marshes, roads, schools and suburbs is mind-boggling: more than a quadrillion gallons. This is equivalent to about one-fifth of the water in all five of the Great Lakes, 100 times as much water as in Lake Meade on the Colorado River, and 30,000 times the daily flow to the sea of Florida's 13 major rivers (Conover 1973). In fact, Florida has more available ground water in aquifers than any other state.

Florida also has abundant surface water in springs, rivers, lakes, bays and wetlands. Of the 84 first-magnitude springs (those that discharge water at a rate of 100 cubic feet per second or more) in the United States, 33 are in Florida — more than any other state. Within Florida's boundaries are approximately 16,000 kilometers (10,000 square miles) of rivers and streams and 7,800 lakes (Kautz et al. 1998). Although more than half of Florida's original wetlands have been drained or developed (Noss and Peters 1995), the state still has vast and diverse wetlands. The Florida Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp cover much of southern Florida, and some Florida wetland communities, such as mangrove swamps and hydric (wet) hammocks, rarely occur in other states." (Pages 49-50)

Continued on the Reverse Side

Ground Water/Aquifers

“Aquifers are underground rocks that hold water. In Florida, three aquifers are used for water supply: the Floridian aquifer, the intermediate aquifer and the superficial aquifer. In northwest Florida, the superficial aquifer is called the sand and gravel aquifer, and in southeast Florida, it is called the Biscayne aquifer.

The Floridian aquifer has been called Florida’s rain barrel (Parker 1951) and is one of the most productive aquifers in the world. Each day Floridians use about 2.5 billion gallons of water from the Floridian aquifer.... Over most of Florida, the Floridian aquifer is covered by sand, limestone that ranges in thickness from a few feet in parts of west-central and north-central Florida to hundreds of feet in ...northeastern Florida, southeastern Florida and the westernmost Panhandle. Within the aquifer, water may travel quickly or very slowly. In parts of the aquifer with caves and large conduits, water may travel several miles in only a few hours. Where water-filled spaces are small and underground routes convoluted, it may take days, weeks, or even years for water to travel the same distance.

In the past several decades, increased pumping of ground water has lowered the water levels in the Floridian aquifer in several places in Florida including the Panhandle, northeastern and southwestern Florida. Water is replaced in the Floridian aquifer by rainfall that soaks into the ground. This is referred to as recharge. “ (Pages 53-54)

That’s a brief description of the water cycle, Florida’s water cycle, Florida’s water resources, and groundwater/aquifers. As stated above, the Floridian aquifer depends on rainfall to recharge itself.

The population in Florida is growing and growth comes with a price. More people means more ground water will be pumped and coupled with drought conditions the negative impact on the aquifers is magnified. Much depends on weather cycles and whether or not we get rain. The bad news is we’ve not had much rain. The good news is that droughts sometimes occur in Florida, but they are followed by the rain. According to SWFWMD, moderate droughts occur frequently, and severe droughts occur in some parts of the state about every six years.

In our little corner of the world we depend on rain and weather patterns to keep everything right. While we wait for the rains to come, please consider what a drought does to our lakes and rivers. Now, picture this: drought conditions, low water and low aquifers combined with unbridled growth, overdevelopment and over pumping. The image is not one we want to see played out in our little corner of the world. Will unbridled growth, overdevelopment and over pumping eventually turn our great state dry? Do all you can to conserve and protect our precious water resources. Without water there will be no future for our children and our children’s children.

Do all you can to protect and conserve our water. Do all you can to help TOOFAR fulfill its mission. Become involved. Attend a meeting. And most important—Don’t Ever Give Up!

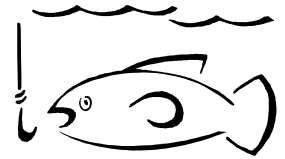
Note: The Publication entitled [Florida Waters](#) is available from SWFWMD. To order a copy call 800-423-1476 and ask for publications. Call the TOOFAR Office at 352-726-5004 with all other questions.

April is Membership Month

We’re asking that each member sign up at least one new member. We’re sure you know at least one person who isn’t a member and who feels the same way you do about our water. Anyone who signs up a new member will be entered into a lottery for a \$20 gift certificate and the person who signs up the most new members will be awarded a \$20 gift certificate. Winners will be announced at the May General Meeting. Please make sure the new member states on their application that they were referred by you so you get credit for the sign up. Let the race begin! Thank you.

THE CATCHING REPORT

by Jerry Schneider



Hello Fellow Fishermen, I hope these words find you healthy, happy, and warm. I will be sooo glad when these frosty mornings are gone for the year. I hate cold weather and it seems that the fish do also. It has them moving around trying to stay in their comfort zones which makes them very hard to locate sometimes.

On the Salt:

Some folks are having a little luck. Trout and red fish have moved to the warmer water at the Progress Energy discharge canal. The dropping water temps are still causing fish to hold up in the warmer waters of Crystal River and the Homosassa River.

Deeper holes in the smaller creeks are another place that should be given a good hard look especially if they are close to a grass flats.

One of the few benefits of falling water temps is the increase in the activity of the sheepshead. This homely stepsister of the more glamorous trout and red fish is excellent table fare. Smaller sheepshead can be found around just about any dock or bridge piling with barnacles on it. Larger sheepshead can be found on oyster bars and rock piles in 8' to 12' of water using shrimp and small crabs as bait. Sheepshead are notorious bait thieves. If you aren't paying close attention to your rods you will just be feeding the fish.

Getting Fresh:

Where is all the water? If it doesn't rain soon, SWFWMD will be managing mud instead of water. We are not the only ones suffering from this drought. The Harris chain (Leesburg) is down 3.75'. The Kissimmee chain and Lake Okeechobee are also down 3.5' to 4'.

Low water and cold weather makes for some tough fishing. Rob Schmidt decided the fireside was the best place to be. Al Grubman reports catches of small bass and pickerel. Greg and June Schmu-kal did quite well in their Orange Lake tourney. A nice five pound bass pushed them to a sixth place finish over all and to the top of the mixed team ranks. Bravo

Time to end this. I wish you blue skies and tight lines. Jerry's gone fishin'.

Fish Camp Philosophy: "If you instill in your child a love of the outdoors and an appreciation of nature, you will have given them a treasure no one can take away." Ted Trueblood.

What's Up

March 22 General Meeting—Cake Auction

March 31, 2007 Member Picnic Call 726-5004 to reserve your spot

April is Sign Up a Member Month

April 26 General Meeting—Franks, Beans, Slaw and Chips Dinner for \$5.00

See you there!

AJ Hendrix
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Andy Hendrix

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CBC 042328



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**NEXT GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - MARCH 22, 2007
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center
Speaker: Mr. Mike Bartlett
Structure Control Supervisor, SWFWMD**

Lake Levels as of February 27, 2007

Structure:	Scheduled	Current
Floral City	not available	36.49
Inverness	not available	35.83
Hernando	not available	35.37
Panasoffkee		37.30
Wysong Up Stream		35.14
Wysong Down Stream		35.13
Leslie Heifner Outside		37.72
Leslie Heifner Inside		36.74

Levels are in ft. above sea level.

**The Wysong Main Gate is fully open.
Low Flow Gate is fully open. 71 cfs
total flow.
Floral City, Inverness and Hernando
Pools— structures are closed.
Leslie Heifner gate closed.**

**Please call Mike Bartlett, SWFWMD, at
800-423-1476 ext. 4515 for more infor-
mation on the lake levels.**

**Remember to recycle and deposit your cans and newspapers in our recycle bins.
Newspapers in bin and cans in plastic bags on the porch.
TOOFAR is located at 26 N Florida Avenue, Inverness. Thank you!**