

TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

July 2008 Volume 200



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

AI submitted the following letter to the Chronicle in response to an editorial published on June 12, 2008. The June 12, 2008 editorial is reprinted later in this publication.

Springs Protection

I have been a frequent critic of the Citrus Chronicle but my sense of fair play demands that I compliment the Chronicle when deserved. The June 12, 2008 Editorial was excellent even if overdue.

The builder interests worked diligently to defeat this measure. They twisted and ignored the truth. When the County Commissioners could not get it right, the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) sent them back to the drawing board. Finally Mr. Maidhof, for the county, negotiated an agreement with DCA which gave our aquifer and springs a chance to start recovery or at least slow down further degradation.

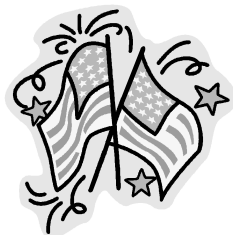
The builders stopped their objections, they voted with the thinking commissioners and the compromise agreement was adopted. In the final analysis the builders and their candidates did not want to continue to stand against our springs and the environment in an election year.

The editorial was clear and well written. The further suggestion in the editorial to attack the fertilizer problem would focus on the other major source of nitrogen in our ground and surface water – another excellent idea.

Thank you,
AI Grubman
TOO FAR, Inc.
President

TOO FAR NEEDS YOU!

TOO FAR needs you and you and you and you to get involved. Save our water. Preserve our resources and way of life. Protect our environment for our children and future generations. You can help. Come to our meetings. Get involved. Voice your opinion. Bring a friend. Spread the word.



Celebrate the Birth of Our Nation

On July 4th 1776 America was founded with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Show your red, white and blue on the 4th of July. Happy Birthday America!

HILITES OF THE JUNE MEETING

Minutes by Pat Brady and Hilites by Jerri Regan

Thanks to Jerri for the ice cream and fixings, Mary for the cake and brownies, and to Jan, Jan and Ann for working the coffee room.

Al called the meeting to order, led the Pledge and delivered the Invocation. Minutes of previous meetings as well as Board Meeting minutes are available. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read subject to an audit.

Guest speaker – Gary Maidhof, Director Development Services, Citrus County who was asked to talk about performance based septic systems. In a natural world nature takes care of waste, however, if you overload the system with too many wastes for it to handle the system fails. Waste is either handled on site or removed to another site and treated.

Performance based systems are designed to perform to a target. Drop the nitrates down to 1.0 milligrams per liter, 95 to 97% treated. The county gave thought to how to make a septic system function like a sewage treatment system – by putting oxygen into it – an aerobic system. But when tested it put more nitrates out because of less holding time in the tank. A solution is to increase the tank retention time. Three system principles: introduction of oxygen with an aerator system, holding system and a pump release.

Standard systems are cheaper than performance based systems. Higher operation costs as well. If you take away a standard septic tank as a mode of disposal, the price of septic vs sewage gets much closer. If you live on the water chances are you had to go to an elevated drain field if you had to put in a new septic lately. Now it becomes cheaper for central sewage in new developments. Citrus County Commissioners said that performance based systems are better for the environment but may make our area uncompetitive in the building environment. One approach is to regulate fertilizer to keep nitrates out of our water. Starting in 2008 any new septic systems in government offices will be performance based systems so the county will learn what the systems really cost to operate. Any large developments will have to put in performance systems.

The last aspect of the plan is that in the year 2012 the County will require performance based systems for everyone.

It is important to remember that we live on our water supply. Springs are a reflection of what is going on under ground. The nitrates in our springs have doubled in the last 20 years. We must get a handle on nitrates and nutrients going into our ground water. Need to go into reuse and denitrification.

What is showing up in the springs today went into the system 20 years ago. But down the road we can see things return if we correct them now. Every time we create a new impervious surface we impact the aquifer. The flood plains that used to capture the water are being developed. Now water is moving on rather than draining down. Need to get the cycle back. There are no secret rivers coming to Florida from Georgia. Our recharge is from rainfall. As a society we need to make a cultural shift. In Florida water was a problem because there was too much, now there is too little. A Q & A session followed.

Announcements:

Al reported on our Director, Bud Rust, who is in a rehabilitation facility recuperating with the help of his daughter Nancy.

Norm Provencal and Jan Ethier talked about upcoming fund raisers.

Bullfrog drawing of \$26 was won by Jerry Schneider.

Motion to adjourn, 2nd and passed.

Meeting Notices

TOO FAR Board Meeting
Thursday July 24 at 5 pm
East Citrus Community Center

TOO FAR General Meeting
Thursday July 24 at 7 pm
East Citrus Community Center

Citrus County Task Force
July 14 at 3 pm
Lecanto Government Bldg.

SWFWMD Governing Board
July 29 at 9 am

Withlacoochee River Basin Board
July 24 at 9 am Brooksville

Citrus County Commissioners
July 8 & 22
at 1 pm Courthouse

Sumter County Commissioners
July 8 at 5 pm Gov't. Annex
July 22 at 5 pm
Colony Cottage

Lake Levels as of June 25, 2008

Structure:	Current
Floral City	38.95
Inverness	35.40
Hernando	33.62
Panasoffkee	39.43
Wysong Upstream	39.34
Wysong Downstream	35.21
Leslie Heifner Outside	39.05
Leslie Heifner Inside	39.05

All levels are in ft. above sea level.

Wysong Main Gate raised to 39 ft.
Low Flow Gate at 39 ft.
153 cfs total flow

Floral City Pool: Leslie Heifner open
Floral City, Golf Course and Moccasin Slough
are closed

Inverness and Hernando Pools structures are
closed.

Please call Mike Bartlett, SWFWMD at 800-423-
1476 ext. 4515 for more information regarding
lake levels and structures.

SKOORS

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Now Is the Time

Do all you can to learn about the candidates up for election. Learn how they feel about the issues that are important to you. Who do they represent? Do they represent special interest groups who don't respect our most precious resource — water. Can you trust them to do the right thing? Find out before election time.

FWC Report Examines Florida's Next Half-Century

The FWC heard a sobering summary of a report being prepared describing what might happen in Florida's environment by 2060, unless residents and leaders adopt smart growth strategies.

The report, titled "Florida 2060: What's at stake for wildlife?" should be completed late summer. It notes, based on a report by 1000 Friends of Florida, that the state's human population could double to 36 million, and millions of acres of important wildlife habitats could disappear beneath development, unless Florida adopts different growth patterns. The report will be available for download at MyFWC.com when it is finished.

FWC Contact: Henry Cabbage 850-488-8843

THE ISSUE: Springs protection. Our Opinion: It's the right thing.

Editorial by the Chronicle editorial board published June 12, 2008.

High cost worth the trade-off

The county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan will now require high-performance septic systems for all houses built in 2012 and beyond that are not served by central sewer. This requirement came about as a part of a settlement between the county and the state Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which oversees county comprehensive plans. For years county commissioners have stated that water quality is their No. 1 priority in order to protect the numerous springs in Citrus County. When developing a springs-protection ordinance, a majority of the commissioners were reluctant to require high-performance septic systems in all new residential development mainly because of higher costs associated with the high-performance systems. Instead, commissioners planned to require them as test cases for new government buildings to study their performance before requiring them for newly built homes. The DCA, which had already informed Citrus officials the high-performance septic systems should be installed in all new developments countywide, rejected the county's proposal.

Although it is good to consider the costs incurred with requiring high-performance septic systems, the long-term benefits of the tanks far outweigh the increased costs. Spring sheds are the recharge basins for springs. Because of the geology found under the surface of Citrus County, the area is covered with spring sheds. Citrus County is one of four unique spring-rich counties in the state and must do its part in protecting and preserving the very springs with which we are blessed.

Requiring the use of the new performance-based tanks would help reduce the nitrates and other pollutants that seep into the aquifer feeding into the Nature Coast springs. By implementing the high-performance septic systems, the residents of Citrus County would be protecting the natural springs of the area.

A perfect companion to the high-performance septic tanks would be banning the sale and use of fast-release fertilizers, which leach into the aquifer and contributes to unwanted algae growth which, in turn, creates nasty muck.

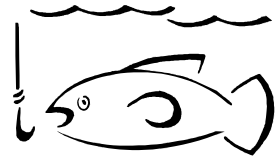
Commissioners need to have the political courage to put sensible measures into place to ensure clean, clear water in the years ahead. Our leaders need to protect the county's spring shed.

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THE CATCHING REPORT

by Jerry Schneider



Hello fellow fishermen. As always I hope these words find you healthy and happy. The boating season is full on. Last year there were 77 boating fatalities in Florida. In a FWC survey of 10,000 registered boat owners, 72% said all boat operators, not just those under 21 years of age, should be tested for safe boating practices, boating law, and navigation rules. I have had enough near misses on the water to think this is a good idea.

ON THE SALT

With the gulf water temp in the low 80's, the Trout and Red fish are in very thin water. Live shrimp and tipped jigs work well in two to three foot of water. Larger Reds are reported near the Chazzakowizka Preserve. Big Black Drum are being caught around the Barge Canal along with an occasional Tarpon. If you want Grouper, they are on the rocks and ledges in 30 to 60 feet of water.

GETTING FRESH

Our lakes are still very low. The welcome afternoon rains are helping but we need much more. Our president Al Grubman reports his Bass catches to be in the small to medium size. On their last trip to Lake Rousseau Greg and June Schmukal said their largest Bass was just over four pounds. Mike Steele of Molly McGee's Deli and Bait Shop reports his live bait customers are doing well with nice catches of Bass and Crappie.

Well that is all there is for now. I wish you blue skies and tight lines.

Jerry's gone fishin'

Fish camp Philosophy: "I have fished through fishless days that I remember happily and without regret" Rodric Haig-Brown

TOO FAR Mission Statement

TOO FAR is 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.

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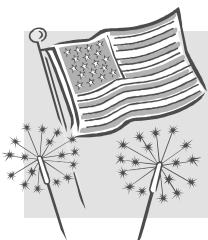
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**NEXT GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - JULY 24, 2008
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center**

**Speaker: Anthony Schembri
Citrus County Administrator**



And the rockets red glare, bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that the flag was still there