

TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

June 2009 Volume 211



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The following was taken from an article written by Howard Troxler, Times Consultant published in the St. Petersburg Times on Wednesday May 20, 2009.

.....On the other hand, I wouldn't just veto SB 2080 — first I'd jump up on the desk, stomp up and down on the bill, crumple it up and set it on fire. *Then* I'd veto it.

This bill represents the Legislature at its worst — an innocent bill promoting "Florida friendly" landscaping, amended at the last minute for a different purpose.

The amendment hands over the power to issue state permits — for water use and for wetlands destruction — to the executive directors of the state's five water districts.

Hey, I don't even like the state's appointed water *boards*. But at least they meet in the sunshine and have public input.

Audubon of Florida calls it "the worst bill of the session."

Veto material? Sure. The worst? Nah. As Yoda assured Obi-Wan Kenobi in *The Empire Strikes Back*: "There is another." But that's a topic for another day.

Frank Heath's reaction to the above was to email the following to Mr. Troxler on May 24, 2009 with copies sent to Senator Charlie Dean and Senator Mike Fasano. His note is as follows:

Subject: The year's worst bill! Senate Bill 360

Hello: Your article, "The year's worst bill", in today's St. Pete Times was excellent. I wrote the Governor a week ago begging him to veto this bill. I know several of my friends have also written. I only wish that I could have been as eloquent as your article. The thing that is so frustrating is that many, many people feel as we do but just don't have the energy (being kind) to step up. Sort of like those that don't vote and then complain about the people that got elected! Human nature is a funny thing. Folks will get all upset and speak up about the darnedest things; center for homeless can't be in MY neighborhood, abortion!! some will say you are going to hell just for saying the word, etc. Then when things like the environment, water, pollution, etc. comes along you have to almost drive them out like a herd of cattle.

I live in Citrus County and subscribe to the St. Pete Times AND the Chronicle just because the Chronicle hardly ever gets involved like you folks. We were heart broken when you closed your office here in Inverness. This Bill's subject material is so important. As written it will legalize much, much damage to our poor state. All for development! I would love to see your newspaper load up on this for a few days in hopes the Governor will get the message.

Keep up the good fight.

Frank Heath
Floral City, FL

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Frank Heath followed up with the following email.

Sent: 6/5/2009 2:33 PM

To: Letters Chronicle <letters@chronicleonline.com>

Cc: Charles Crist <charlie.crist@myflorida.com>, Charles Dean <dean.charles.web@flsenate.gov>, Mike Fasano Senator <fasano.mike@flsenate.gov>, ron.schultz@myfloridahouse.gov

Gentlemen:

Senate Bill 360 was signed into law by Governor Crist thereby condoning the irresponsible action by the Legislature. This bill, now law, effectively guts the Growth Management Act of 1985. Future developers do not have to make sure that the roads can handle the growth they are bringing.

The first reaction has been to decry the Governor and rightfully since he could have stopped it. However, let's not let the members of the legislature off the hook. After all they were the ones who presented the bill to the Governor.

Members of both houses voted overwhelmingly FOR the bill. You can check the voting record for yourself but these are the stats: Senate 30 yeas, 7 nays, 3 no vote; House 78 yeas, 37 nays, 5 no vote. Members of the legislature have routinely used the excuse that they didn't understand the bill OR the bill was changed after they had read the early drafts. This kind of excuse with these stats just won't stand up. The citizens of Florida have been dealt a serious blow by the moneyed interests who control the legislature.

There is only one way to deal with this kind of skullduggery and that is by voting those out of office that sell their vote, whatever the reason. The legislative voting records list the entire membership and how their vote was cast on each bill. It is very easy to obtain. I suggest to all citizens who vote to keep this affront in mind and to cast their votes for other candidates. We might not get someone better, but that is our only weapon. Personally I intend to do just that.

Lake Levels as of June 8, 2009

Structure	Current Level	All levels are in ft. above sea level.
Floral City	37.53	Leslie Heifner open
Inverness	35.21	Floral City, Inverness and Hernando
Hernando	33.76	structures are closed
Panasoffkee	38.31	
Wysong Upstream	37.41	Main gate raised to 39 ft. Low flow gate
Wysong Downstream	36.46	at 35.11 ft. 27 USGS total cfs flow
Leslie Heifner Upstream	37.71	Gate fully open to 9 ft.
Leslie Heifner Downstream	37.67	

Additional information on lake levels and rain fall is available at the SWFWM website. Check it out: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/hydrology>

HILITES MAY MEETING

By Pat Brady

Call to order, Pledge and Invocation - Al Grubman

Secretary's minutes are available on request.

Treasurer's report - Greg Schmukal gave balances in accounts.

President gave some short history of our relationship to Swiftmud which has been good or bad over the years depending on who we were dealing with. Phillip Rhinesmith is one of the good guys with this organization and our speaker tonight.

Phillip has been with the District for about 22 years and now manages the restoration of lands. Talked with us about the restoration of Grand Prairie with in the Boy Scout land which was purchased from the Scouts. There is a long ditch (Shinn) dug in years past. Mr. Rhinesmith brought a Power Point presentation with many photos of the Shinn Ditch restoration. The original owner, Bud Shinn, was attempting to drain surface water from his land for agriculture purposes by digging this large ditch. About 1500 acres were affected. Some of the impacts were the growth of woody vegetation and hardwoods instead of the original marsh environment. This is wetlands interference is common throughout the Tsala Apopka chain.

To create the restoration plan models are created to determine off-site impacts. Have to deal with permitting agencies too. Have been using plugs rather than filling the ditch in. They were only given a short window of time to complete the project and finished it by the end of December. Created ponds along the area to be retention areas if plugs gave way in rain events. The plugs force water into the marshes. After a few growing seasons we expect trees to die and wetlands vegetation will begin to come back.

Area is very sensitive to work in because of the history of the area. Advisory Council on historic preservation gave static on removing the old pedestrian bridge because it was over 50 years old. So, had to document it for the historical archives before it could be removed.

Lake Bradley is beginning of the chain for Tsala Apopka just south of the Floral City pool. About 600 acres that have grown over almost completely leaving 3 small pools. The lake contains one of the biggest deposits of agriculture peat they have seen. A peat company began looking into the permitting peat removal. Chain is about 3000 years old when fracturing began occurring. Bradley is about 6000 years old. When investigating the permitting aerials from the 1940s showed that the area hasn't changed that much which means the company could only work in the pool areas and not the surrounding wetlands or would require mitigation making it unprofitable for the peat company so still in discussion. It's a 10 year project. This is a case where a lake could be cleaned for free because of its economic value instead of the usual millions this type of work costs. They even usually do their own restoration. They even offered to pay into a mitigation fund for the area. There are ways to get this project restarted.

President's Report: Al Grubman

Getting closer with other environmental groups. Al has been elected a director of the Homosassa River Alliance and also now on the Water Advisory Board with Greg as his alternate. Swiftmud is starting a land use stake holder's discussion group and Al will be serving on this as well. His position is more access to public lands for everyone.

HILITES MAY MEETING continued

At the last task force meeting Al was invited to get together with Fish & Wildlife. So met with several people and is hoping for some local projects to eventually get done. They seem interested in a Flying Eagle clean up.

Also suggested Al get together with DEP to talk about volunteers working in Flying Eagle which we have offered to do. This offer has been repeatedly rejected. Swiftmud says we can't do anything on sovereign lands. But DEP is cooperative and looking for answers. Al reported on the water removal near 44 & 75 by some large trucks. Al investigated this and reported to the group what he told us in the earlier board meeting about these events and the water permit given to the H2O transport from Clemont, FL. He sent the information to Dave Moore. It was forwarded to Bobby Lou who reported it was owned by William Farcus who has a permit. Mr. Farcus own a great deal of land in the area including a large spring. 496 gallons per day for bottled water is allowed on the permit to be sold within the District, but found water is going outside the District. Legal staff is formally notifying the permittee that this activity is not allowed and requires new permitting.

Copies of the Home Town petition are available to sign at the front desk. Our county again decided to build on wetlands. Voted to change the comprehensive plan to allow increased density and building on wetlands. The petition requires these types of changes put to the vote. Democracy doesn't work when our commissioners are bought by developers.

Directors' Reports

Bob Hoover is editor emeritus of Marsh Rider Magazine where he has written 3 articles in the last issue with his original photos. He mentioned TOO FAR several times in the articles. Bob reports that mufflers on air boats is now the law. With large fines being enforced clear up to loosing your license to operate a boat. Also have to have a 16 ft. flag. FWC and county are enforcing. Some of the noise comes from the propeller rather than the motor after a certain RPMs. Much of the noise can be eliminated by courtesy on the part of the drivers. The new county boats can barely be heard.

Frank encouraged everyone to write letters on bills and issues. If the governor doesn't sign or veto they automatically become law. One bill sets up water czars for the state, a real catastrophe! The other impacts builders' sets aside requirements for appropriate roads for the size of a development or other service. If this passes we will look like Pinellas County soon. One bill is 360 the other 2080. There is a senate bill webpage to read the disposition. Al complemented Frank on his prolific environmental letter writing.

Bullfrog drawing \$18 was won by Tony Aguanno. Motion to adjourn, 2nd, passed.

Meeting Notices

Citrus County Commissioners
June 23 and July 14 at 1 pm
Courthouse
More info at:
[www.citruscountyfl.org/
commissioners/agenda/
agenda_deadlines.htm](http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commissioners/agenda/agenda_deadlines.htm)

Sumter County Commissioners
June 23 at 5 pm
Colony Cottage
More info: [http://sumtercountyfl.gov/http://
CurrentEvents.aspx#CID26](http://sumtercountyfl.gov/http://CurrentEvents.aspx#CID26)

SWFWMD Governing Board
June 23 at 9 am
Brooksville

THE CATCHING REPORT

by Jerry Schneider



Hello fellow fishermen, as always I hope these words find you healthy and happy.

On the Salt

The water temp in the Gulf is above 80 degrees and everything with scales is hungry. For example the Reds are everywhere, with some very nice catches coming from north of the Yankeetown boat ramp. Shrimp is the bait of choice for these Reds and the Flounder that are also in this area. Porpoise Point and St. Martins Key are also holding some nice Reds. Grass beds are the place to find the Sea Trout. Look for them in 6 to 8 feet of water and offer them live shrimp. Grouper are moving shallower. Structure in 15 to 25 feet of water is holding them in good numbers. Don't be surprised if you hook a Mangrove Snapper or even an occasional Cobia from this same structure. Big schools of Spanish Mackerel are moving around our area. They are prone to pop up and bust bait pods almost anywhere. HINT -- Watch for the diving birds. Tripletail are becoming more numerous. Any floating debris or vertical structure will hold these tasty fish. Break out your bullet proof tackle because the Tarpon are headed our way. The rising water temps have brought them to just south of Homosassa so it won't be long before they are here.

Getting Fresh.

Rising water temps is also having an effect on the fresh water fishing. The frantic pan fish bite has slowed now that the spawn is over. Nice big Crappie and Bluegills are still being caught but the numbers of fish are down. The Bass bite seems to be going in the opposite direction. Good catches are being reported from the Harris chain and Orange and Lochloosa. Our local lakes are giving up some nice Bass also. Mike Steele at Molly McGee's told me one of his pan fish customers decided to buy a dozen shiners rather than his usual minnows. He was back in a few hours having caught two big Bass that weighed 8lb and 9lb from Lake Henderson.

As I write this report it is raining outside. It has rained every day for the past ten days and the lake levels are starting to rise. If we are real lucky this will continue so keep your fingers crossed.

That's all for now. May all your fish be big old good'uns or good old big'uns.

Jerry's gone fishing

Fishcamp Philosophy; Lord, suffer me to catch a fish so large that even I in talking of it afterward shall have no need to lie.

Herbert Hoover

**Needed: A few good men and women Veterans to join us at the
Allen-Rawls American Legion Post #77—Inverness
For more information call Norm Provencal, Post Commander at 726-4257**

Get Well Wishes

Get Well Wishes from all of TOO FAR to two active and supportive TOO FAR members. Please keep Cindy Baldwin and Bill Johnson in your thoughts and prayers. Get well soon! Best wishes to our Secretary, Pat Brady. We are all very happy she is well again. Take care Pat.

**TOOFAR INC
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SPECIAL KUDOS TO GREG!

TOO FAR Treasurer and multi-year Pig Roast Chairman is a major supporter of Save Our Waters Week (SOWW). He has been on the SOWW Committee and has been in charge of the shoreline cleanup for the Eastern half of Citrus County for years.

Greg has also represented TOO FAR to SOWW and vice-versa. The news is that Greg has taken over as Treasurer of SOWW putting his professional skills to work again.

**NEXT GENERAL MEETING THURSDAY— JUNE 25, 2009
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center
Speaker: Lon Frye, Transportation Director Citrus County**

**Taxpayers Outraged Organization For Accountable Representation
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SKOORS

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