

TOO FAR NEWS

Protecting & Conserving Our Water

February 2010 Volume 219



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our January meeting starring Dave Moore, Executive Director of SWFWMD as our speaker was a celebration of our new relationship. Whether it was us or them the relationship was not good. It was not constructive. But last Thursday night we listened politely and learned. We asked good questions designed to learn and understand. There were only one or two small slips of our hospitality; after all he was our guest.

It does not matter if we love Dave or even if we agree with Dave. We love the water and work for it – Dave manages the water and listens to us. That is enough reason to work with Dave. I respect Dave and many others at SWFWMD. I am a new-comer with a good personal history with Dave. Others recount another kind of history but that should be moved aside because working together will produce the best results.

Now if our national politicians would move ahead as much as we have to work for the common good – wouldn't it be wonderful.

As we move through hopefully our last chills of the season, the bass start getting on the beds and the long term forecast saying more spring rain than usual, let's look for bright possibilities. The February SWFWMD Withlacoochee River Basin Board will hopefully make some important moves for Potts Preserve/Hernando Pool. By the time you read this we should be able to review what happened. Maybe this year the rain will be better than average, the lakes, rivers and aquifer will catch up and fill up and government will take action to protect our waters from waste, misuse and nitrogen.

Another thing is happening this year - it is an election year. Our local politicians are listening more closely. Be informed to make intelligent decisions. Start preparing now. Support your candidates. Make sure you let your representatives know what you want. They may or may not listen but if you don't tell them what you want the best you can hope for is that they may guess right.

AI

Taxpayers Outraged Organization For Accountable Representation

TOO FAR

PO Box 2709

Inverness, FL 34451

352-726-5004

Email: toofarinc@earthlink.net

Check out our website: www.toofarinc.com

DID YOU KNOW?

According to FWC Fast Facts 2009, Florida has:

- 53,927 square miles of land
- 5,983 square miles of water
- More than 34 million acres of public and private land
- Including 5.8 million acres of wildlife management areas (one of the largest public-hunting systems in the country)
- 2,276 miles of tidal shoreline (8,426 “detailed” miles takes bays, sounds and other bodies either to the head of tidewater or to a point where such waters narrow to 100 feet.
- About 1,700 named rivers, streams and creeks travelling 10,550 miles
- Approximately 12,000 miles of fishable rivers, streams and canals and an overall total of 51,858 miles of flowing water, including minor tributaries, creeks and ditches (20,000 of which consistently have water)
- About 7,700 lakes greater than 10 acres, covering 3 million total acres

Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife-Watching Participation:

- Number of hunters – 239,000
- Number of freshwater and saltwater anglers – 2,767,000
- Freshwater – 1,417,000 (1,155,000 resident and 262,000 nonresident)
- Saltwater – 2,002,000 (1,286,000 resident and 716,000 nonresident)
- Nonresidents (freshwater and saltwater) – 885,000
- Days of Fishing – 46,311,000 (24.5 million freshwater, 23.1 million saltwater, 4.8 million nonresident)
- Number of wildlife watchers – 3,287,000

According to Florida Department of Environmental Protection:

Geologists estimate that there are more than 700 springs in the state of Florida, representing what may be the largest concentration of freshwater springs on Earth.

Archaeological evidence indicates that people have been attracted to Florida’s springs for thousands of years. The springs made the perfect home for Native Floridians who used them as a source of water and food, while the clay taken from the spring’s bottom was ideal for making arrowheads, spear heads and knives.

The first spring dwellers coexisted with the now extinct and mighty animals such as the mastodon, mammoth, ground sloth, giant beaver and giant armadillo. During the last Ice Age, 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, sea level was as much as 300 feet below present levels.

As the last of the Ice Age came to a close in Florida, many environmental changes were occurring. Global weather patterns changed and sea levels began to rise. The large animals that had once roamed the Florida landscape were becoming extinct. As these drastic changes were taking place, Florida’s human inhabitants were forced to adapt.

Find out more at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/springs/about.htm>

FISHING –N-HOPEFULLY CATCHING

ON THE TOURNAMENT TRAIL:

Tournament #1 for the North Div. of the Fishers of Men National Tournament Trail took place on January 16th on the St. John's River at Palatka. Greg (Big Bass) Schmukal and Ron (I'll catch-em) Zarn were on the road at 4 a.m. on their way to Palatka. It rained all the way from Ocala to Palatka, not a hard rain but a steady one. Just before launch, a mist of rain came in producing a thick fog, which would require the launch to be delayed by 30 minutes. Finally, the fog somewhat lifted and we were able to begin launching at 7:30. The first boat to launch was Greg and Ron. YES, they were No. 1 at the start. Again, it was not a good weather day for fishing. Greg and Ron had no bites for several hours and were getting very disappointed. BUT THEN – all of a sudden- Greg's line jerked and a fish was pulling. Ron said Greg had a big smile on his face, the way the fish was pulling he knew it had to be a big one. There was hope for the team at last. As the fish was pulled closer to the boat, it was a big fish all right – a big pickerel (with lots of sharp teeth). Oh well it was only 10 a.m., still plenty of time to catch them.

At weigh in, a series of thunderstorm bands were moving in the direction of the launch site which produced strong winds and made loading the boats difficult. Our team, the first ones to launch, were the first ones to come in. (See they were still NO. 1). The waters of the St. Johns River dipped down to 43 degrees in some areas, which challenged all the anglers. When all 22 boats had checked in, only 11 teams brought fish to the scales. First place 12.88 lbs. (included big bass 5.47 lbs.) Second place 10.30 lbs. Third place 8.27 lbs. Big Bass and I'll catch-em were among the teams who did not have any fish to weigh in, so I guess they tied for 12th place with the 10 other teams.

**Next tournament scheduled for February 20, 2010 will be "Way Down the Suwannee River"
Note: One of members of the FOMNTT got second in the FLW tournament on Lake Okeechobee. WAY TO GO.**

CLOSER TO HOME: Hello Mates! Captain Mike of Molly McGee's here with a small fishing report.

This cold weather is keeping the specs plentiful. Our bait customers have told me their still catching their limit. Also they are GREAT EATING FISH.

A little Fishing tip: Specs school together in the early cold morning making them easier to catch. Then as it warms up they start to scatter into the grassy marsh. Bass seem to go into deeper water, making themselves much harder to catch. Please remember that largemouth bass are on a CATCH and RELEASE PROGRAM. We all need to obey this program so we have these beautiful fish around for many years to come. Thank you for caring about our waters.

Good Fishing Mates, Capt. Mike – out

Note: Some small bass have been caught in the Hernando Pool.

RAFFLE TIME

Don't forget to buy your raffle tickets.

Raffle Prizes

First Prize \$250 Cash
Second Prize \$100 Publix Gift Card
Third Prize \$45 Outback Certificate
Fourth Prize \$25 Enrico's Certificate
Tickets are \$2 each or \$5 for 3 tickets
Drawing Thursday, February 25, 2010
at the TOO FAR General Meeting
You need not be present to win.

COMING UP - DON'T MISS IT!

Beginning at 6:00 P.M. on
February 25, 2010
BAR-B-QUE Pork Sandwich Dinner
\$6 includes dessert & drink

Fantastic Chinese Auction
Raffle winner will be drawn

If you attend only one meeting a year,
this is the one!
Great food and fun for all.
See you there!

TOO FAR MISSION

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.

YES, I'll join the fight to protect, preserve and conserve our most precious water resources and to preserve our way of life for future generations.

TOO FAR Membership Application

Name: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Telephone 1 : _____ Telephone 2: _____
Email: _____ Family Size: _____
Snowbird Address: _____
Snowbird Months in Florida: _____
What are you willing to do to help? _____
Special Skills: _____

Dues are \$20 a year for Family Membership and \$200 for a Lifetime Membership

Mail to: TOO FAR, Inc.
PO Box 2709
Inverness, Florida 34451

Meetings

The SWFWMD Basin Board and Governing Board schedules, agendas and minutes are in alphabetical order on web site <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us> under boards. The two of most interest in Citrus County are Withlacoochee Basin Board and the Coastal Basin Board.
Citrus-Hernando Waterways Restoration Council, Citrus County Task Force meetings are at <http://swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/waterways/citrus.php>

HILITES OF THE JANUARY MEETING

Minutes by Pat Brady

Call to Order, Pledge & Invocation — Al Grubman, President
Secretary's Report – available on request from Pat Brady or call the office
Installation of Officers – Gary Bartell, Chairman of Citrus County Commission
Greg Schmukal - VP, June Schmukal - Treasurer
Directors: Bob Adamic, Bob Hoover, Joyce Valentino
Treasurer's Report – June Schmukal

Al introduced our guest Speaker, Dave Moore, Director of Swiftmud, who must be the busiest person in the area. Deserves great thanks for the changes he has made in Swiftmud. Recently we had a freeze event requiring the pumping of ground water to protect strawberries, blueberries and other crops. Water changing to ice protects the plants. The temperature has been below 34 degrees for 11 days which is a 100 year record. Aquifer went down 60 ft. and had to investigate 85 sink holes and 700 well complaints. 640 are back on line. This is a 1 in 500 year freeze event.

What has been done to protect the aquifer? The amount of water per night in Plant City was about 1 billion of water a night. Normally at 55 ft above sea level and dropped below sea level but recovers quickly by 30 ft. Swiftmud provided water to people who lost wells.

A description of recreational property held for the people is available at Swiftmud's website: watermatters.org. Public events are held periodically, so check the website from time to time. The most important new Swiftmud policy is one focused on maximizing the flow of water into the lakes. A guest measured 46 inches of rain over the last year but sees no difference in lake level. Will it get any better? Really have to look at the rain in the Green Swamp and south to see a raise in the lake levels. Rate of decline is dramatically less than last year. If we do have a wet winter they will be diverting water earlier.

The lakes need 50 inches of rain just to keep up with evaporation. Water control structures help keep the pools equal.

Florida is the largest user of reclaimed water. Have to have a significant concentration of users to recapture water economically and Citrus County is very spread out. Have to have good enforcement and day restrictions as well. Jim Bitter mentioned that the county has started a study on privatization of our water system, but you can see the results of this by what they are dealing with right now trying to find leaks resulting from lack of maintenance.

President's Report - suggestions for speakers – welcome from all

Jim Bitter mentioned that the Homosassa River Alliance has a slide presentation on the effects of fertilizers in water. Jim will check into getting this for us. Ron Miller has done it.

Robert Knight – come and talk about privatization of water – Joyce – Al will set up a date.

Jan 14th there were some standards on water runoff that were set. EPA based on the DEP studies. Would like to have some nutrient studies on Citrus County. Need to figure out impact on our county of these new standards. Jim says putting together some information of a study they've been doing for lake watch.

Bullfrog drawing won by Frank Heath. Adjourn.

Board of County Commissioners' Meetings

Citrus County Board of County Commissioners' Meetings are found at
http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commissioners/agenda/agenda_deadlines.htm

Sumter County Board of County Commissioners' Meetings are found at
<http://sumtercountyfl.gov/CurrentEvents.aspx#CID26>

**TOOFAR INC
PO BOX 2709
INVERNESS, FL
34451**

**PRST STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO 31
INVERNESS FL
34451**

IN THIS ISSUE
President's Message
Florida Facts
Fishing
Raffle
Hilites January



**GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY - February 25, 2010
7 pm at the East Citrus Community Center
Speaker: Chairman Gary Bartell
Board of County Commissioners**

**BAR-B-QUE PORK SANDWICH DINNER at 6 pm
Chinese Auction
Board Meeting at 5 pm**

Lake Levels as of February 1, 2010

Structure	Current Level	All levels are in ft. above sea level
Floral City	39.17	Wysong Main Gate raised to 39 ft.
Inverness	37.75	Low Flow Gate at 35.67 ft.
Hernando	36.12	238 USGS cfs total flow
Panasoffkee	38.95	Leslie Heifner open
Wysong Up	38.69	Floral City open, Golf Course closed
Wysong Down	35.61	Moccasin Slough open
Leslie Heifner Up	39.30	Inverness structures closed
Leslie Heifner Down	39.30	Hernando structures closed