

Pinellas County LRRC Meeting Minutes

Weedon Island Preserve

April 22, 2014: 2-5 PM

Members in Attendance: Bill Allbright, Elizabeth Fleming, Serra Herndon, Dave Kandz, Terri Skapik, Doug Speeler, Dave Travis, Katie Tripp

Members Absent: Janine Cianciolo, Mark LaPrade, Dave Markett, Charles White

Staff in Attendance: Carol Grynewicz, Dave Walker (Pinellas County Water and Navigation); Scott Calleson, Ron Mezich, Mike Sommers (FWC); Pete Plage (USFWS); Dan Pariso (FWC LE)

1. All members and staff in attendance introduced themselves
2. An Introduction to the LRRC process was provided by Scott Calleson. The committee was notified that our 60 day time clock to formulate a written response to FWC's proposal starts today (4/22/14).
 - a. If a member cannot attend a meeting, another designee from his or her organization can attend, but cannot vote
3. Pinellas County Attorney Dave McRae provided an overview of the Sunshine Law provisions that govern the LRRC
4. Election of Officers
 - a. Katie Tripp volunteered to serve as Recording Secretary. The proposal was approved with no dissent.
 - b. Doug Speeler nominated Terri Skapik as Chair, Dave Travis seconded, all in favor, none opposed
 - c. Katie Tripp nominated Elizabeth Fleming as Co-Chair, Terri Skapik seconded, all in favor, none opposed
5. Meeting Scheduling
 - a. The next meeting will be Friday May 2nd in the Coastal Classroom at Weedon Island from 1-3 PM. The third meeting will take place at Weedon Island on Thursday May 8th from 1-3 PM.
 - b. Members of the public who attend an LRRC meeting will be granted 3 minutes to speak at the end of the meeting, unless the committee is scheduled to take a vote and members of the public have come to address an item up for a vote that day.
6. Scott Calleson reviewed the materials in the committee's binders
 - a. There are 4 areas in the North County and 17 in South County that FWC has identified for potential manatee protection speed zones. The need for zones is substantially less in the cold season, so most of the zones for consideration are warm season only, with

the exception of some potential year-round zones. In instances where the ICW has been suggested for regulation, the write-ups ID the area and the distance of the ICW proposed for regulation. Let FWC know if there are additional areas that need regulation.

- b. If there are existing watersports areas or other specific uses that would be affected by zones, FWC would like to hear that. They try to structure zones that don't take away those areas unless very important for manatees.
- c. The Gulf waters are essentially excluded from consideration
- d. Doug Speeler requested aerial survey data for Pinellas and statewide. He also inquired about a proposal from his group 8 or 9 years ago to change the type of airplane used in surveys to rotor craft and wanted to know if that was considered. Bill Allbright responded that the FWC still uses fixed-wing Cessnas because helicopters scare manatees.
- e. Katie Tripp asked several questions:
 - i. Was a white paper or other summary report resulted from the 2008-2010 collection of aerial survey data for Pinellas County.
 - 1. Scott Calleson said a paper was not part of the data collection process.
 - ii. Can maps showing manatee rescue locations be provided?
 - 1. Scott Calleson requested review of what was provided and if additional information was still desired, it could be requested.
 - iii. Can a break-out of the mortality data be provided to distinguish acute vs. chronic deaths?
 - 1. Scott Calleson said this could be done, with a few caveats likely for older data
 - iv. Can the PDFs on our CDs be zoomed in to see more detail on maps (i.e. Figure 15)?
 - 1. Scott Calleson wasn't sure, but said if there was something we needed to see in more detail, to let him know.
- f. Terri Skapik asked about the reasoning to add an FWC zone to an area already regulated by a local zone.
 - i. Scott Calleson explained that on the water, it may have no practical impact. If an area needs to be regulated for manatee protection, FWC aims to protect it with a manatee protection zone, because other regulations could disappear, and an area important for manatee protection could go unregulated for 10-15 years until another LRRC is formed. FWC officers are also more likely to patrol state zones vs. local zones. State zones can also be patrolled and tickets written by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement, but these officers cannot enforce local zones. Local officers can enforce state zones.
- g. When zones are considered, they must be oriented in a way that can be posted on the water.
- h. Bill Allbright commented that the County and Municipalities recently removed ICW speed limits, now the LRRC may add back regulation- unfortunate timing. He also

mentioned that there is an attempt to make boater's education uniform nationwide, with the same company producing education materials for multiple states. There is also an attempt to achieve uniform signage nationwide and just tell people what the can/cannot do and why, without explaining why the sign is there.

- i. Scott Calleson said that the ICW from Honeymoon Island to Tierra Verde was a 30 mph zone (if not otherwise regulated), now speed is unlimited. Scott's understanding was that most of the 30 mph zone was not signed or enforced and areas outside the ICW were unregulated. When amendments were made, local slow speed areas were maintained but other regulations were removed. Little effect on the waterway is expected.
 - ii. FWC would not duplicate signage, but would try to line any new zones up with existing zones and signs. Part of the reason for identifying a zone as a manatee zone is that FWS cannot write federal citations for conservation zones if the species affected is not listed on the sign.
 - i. Contact FWC staff if we need more info and they will forward any responses to the entire committee.
 - j. Terri Skapik asked if the cities and municipalities know about the current LRRC effort.
 - i. Scott met with them last July to let them know FWC was considering manatee protection zones. The County will contact the cities again now that the LRRC has been formed and begun to meet. City input will also be needed for FWC to prepare its Statement of Estimated Regulatory Cost (SERC) for the proposed rule.
 - k. Katie Tripp inquired about obtaining call logs for FWC LE dispatch in Pinellas County
 - i. Captain Klein with Boating and Waterways was identified as an appropriate contact
 - ii. Dave Walker will provide contact info for Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, since they also provide marine patrol.
 - l. Katie Tripp asked how citizen comments gathered by FWC over time have been incorporated into FWC's proposal.
 - i. Scott Calleson explained that FWC keeps a file and consulted the various correspondences when preparing the proposal we have been asked to review.
7. Minutes will be posted as Draft on the County website until the LRRC approves, then they will be posted as Final
8. Doug Speeler made a motion to adjourn, Terri seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 5 PM