**Wakulla Springs Alliance**

**6-19-15 Board Meeting Minutes**

The Wakulla Springs Alliance held a Board meeting on June 19, 2015 at the Renaissance Center. The draft agenda and list of participants can be found in Appendices A and B. Review the action items underlined below for your commitments and actions you can help with. This report is based on the secretary’s notes and does not capture everything or exactly what was said.

**Opening**

Chairman Sean McGlynn welcomed everyone, reviewed the meeting agenda and everyone introduced themselves. The minutes and the treasurer’s report (Appendix C) was presented and approved.

**Wakulla State Forest**

Daniel Stephenstalked aboutland management of the forest as it relates to our Wakulla Springs water protection mission. These are some facts on the forest:

* Approximately 4,897 Acres.
* Located in northeast Wakulla County and southeast Leon County.
* Acquired between 1999-2002 & 2013.
* Majority of the forest acquired with Conservation and Recreation (CARL), Preservation 2000 (P2000), & Florida Forever funding.
* The primary purpose of acquisition by the State of Florida was to preserve the quality of Wakulla Springs by protecting the land above the ground conduits that supply the springs.

The goals of the forest management are to:

* Preserve the quality of ground water leading to Wakulla Springs.
* Practice sustainable forest management for the efficient generation of revenue and in support of state forest management objectives.
* Provide for resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities for multiple interests.
* Restore and manage healthy forests and native ecosystems ensuring the long-term viability of populations and species listed as endangered, threatened or rare, and other components of biological diversity including game and non-game wildlife and plants.
* Protect known archaeological, historical, cultural and paleontological resources.
* Restore, maintain and protect hydrological functions related water resources and the health of associated wetland and aquatic communities.
* To provide research and educational opportunities related to natural resource management.

Restoration activities include:

* Prescribed Fire
* Timber Harvest
* Mechanical Site Prep
* Reforestation
* Groundcover Restoration
* Invasive Exotic Control

To protect water quality they:

* Follow State BMPs Standards
* Improvement of roads and water crossings
* Limited amount of roads open
* Fencing off springs and posting signs
* Fertilizer forbidden
* Primitive/Challenge hunt

The group also discussed the trash and possibly petroleum tank in one of the sinks in the 8-mile track. Jeff Piddle will follow-up on this to investigate what is there and determine how it can be removed, if needed.

**Woodville Karst Plain Project Update** (See Appendix D for background on WKPP)

**Casey McKinlay, Director of the WKPP** presented an update and discussion about their continued exploration of the caves and management issues regarding the opening of diving areas in the Park, like Emerald Sink, to all divers and the public. Emerald and Clear-Cut Sinks are more accessible for cave diving with less monitoring. 24-hour access may cause damage by divers and recreational users. Cheryl sink is open to walk in also. Word is getting out that Emerald is open. Last weekend there were golf carts and 20-30 people there. Posting is confusing and it says you have to read a brochure that may not be there. Swimming is not prohibited. Divers need to register and comply with requirements. We need to write a letter to Pete Scalco with copy to DEP Tallahassee. The Executive Committee will review a draft letter for Sean’s signature. The Sally Ward Spring has lost 2-3 feet of soil from diver activities. Steps are needed.

Casey also talked about the proposed Hwy 319 stormwater ponds including the pond that may overflow into split Sink. Chips Hole and the cave system needs to be considered in siting the stormwater pond at 319 and 267. There were pictures that show the proposed pond that includes the Dugger Sink. Turner Sink has new exploration that discovered over a mile of new caves that are dynamic. It flows 7 miles to Wakulla Springs. Reports are provided to Wakulla Springs Park.

Connections have been made using dye testing where divers haven’t been able to verify.

Wakulla County is seeking a text amendment to allow commercial in the SPZ. It should consider the cave system.

**DEP Multiple Use of State Parks Policy and the Future of Wakulla Spring State Park**

Jim Stevenson, former chief biologist for Florida State Parks explained that DEP’s new leadership wants to remake the FL Park System. The move is to initiate “consumptive use” management. The Park Service employees can’t talk about this. 89 park managers were brought together and were told to support the new policy or leave.

Team Myakka includes Jim and Albert and locals in Sarasota. There have been Editorials and letters published in papers all over the state. We need a vigilant press and angry public to stop this. Albert and Jim met with a Cabinet Aid. The leaders of the 12,000 members of the FL Federation of Garden Clubs are on board. The DEP Public Relations is being overwhelmed by calls, emails, letters and media coverage. Local legislative delegations can also influence the agency. Changes require a public meeting and a proposed management plan that needs to be approved by ARC.

DEP Secretary Severson’s approval in June has been postponed until August and other candidates may be considered. FL Parks are 77% self-supporting. The average of other states is 42%.

Former park directors wrote letters to the papers. 26 park managers did a letter. Tom Swihart contributed 2 blogs. Carol will look up the supporters of the multi-use bill that will probably be refilled next year. This may be coming from Governor Scott. Everyone should call Cabinet members about the policy and Severson’s appointment. We can show up at the cabinet meeting on Tuesday June 23. Madeleine and Carol will attend. Madeleine will send list of DEP candidates.

**Hwy 319 Update**

Bob Deyle reported that they sent comments to FDOT. Consultants said we need to meet with Michael Batemen at NWFWMD. They considered WSA and FOWS comments and want to be responsive. Casey’s letter is also being considered. Bob will set up a meeting with the NWWMD and DOT consultants

**Land Acquisition**

Albert Jim, Bob and Cal are recommending sites for Amd 1 funding. They are working with maps and will make recommendations in the next few weeks. Call has met with Revel and another owner about sale of their lands to the state.

There is a meeting with Blueprint (Wayne Tedder, Theresa Heiker) on Monday on acquisition of 50 of 400 acres. There is a major sinkhole and it will provide a trail connection to other parks. Owners may sell it for development. There was a suggestion that the Trust for Public Land could buy it for resale to the State. It is a top priority for springs' protection. The site is approved for 1600 residential units plus commercial uses. The County wants it developed. Owners bought it for $3 million and they are asking $9 million. FL Forever is working on an appraisal. Sean and John Outland will attend the meeting. We have sent a letter. There are archeological features on the site. Buck Lake Alliance and Friends of Lake Lafayette are the lead on this project.

**Legislative Report**

Charles Pattison reported on the limited and inappropriate use of the Amendment 1 funds and springs legislation. See the [1000 Friends Legislative Update](http://www.1000friendsofflorida.org/2015-legislative-session/) for more details.

**What’s New?**

* We have three springs' license plate grants. Jim is meeting this afternoon to start work on the film. The contracts will be approved and signed by the WSA Executive Committee after the meeting.
* We have brochures to give out.
* DACS wants water meeting on July 31.
* Bob Knight has a new book, “Silenced Springs”

Appendix A

**Proposed 6-19-15 WSA Agenda (DRAFT)**

**Renaissance Center**

435 N. Macomb Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room

**9:00  Opening**

Welcome and meeting agenda review

Introductions

Secretary Minutes

Treasurer Report

**9:10 Daniel Stephens, Wakulla State Forest:** land management as it relates to our Wakulla Springs water protection mission

**10:00 Casey McKinlay, director of the WKPP** (currently mapping caves, tentatively confirmed): an update and discussion about their continued exploration of the caves and management issues regarding the opening of diving areas in the Park, like Emerald Sink, to all divers.

**10:30 Jim Stevenson, former chief biologist for Florida State Parks:** DEP Multiple Use in State Parks: The Future of Wakulla Spring State Park?

**11:00: What’s New**

Logo Status: – Maria Balingit

Hwy 319 Update – Albert Gregory and Bob Deyle

Land Acquisition – Albert Gregory and Bob Deyle

Legislative Report – Charles Pattison

Wakulla Spring and Springshed updates – Sean McGlynn

**11:45 Other Business**

**12:00 Adjourn**

Appendix B

**Board, Advisors and Guests**

\* Indicates 6-19-15 Participants

Board Members

Bob Deyle \*

Albert Gregory

Cal Jamison \*

Howard Kessler

Todd Kincaid

Debbie Lightsey

Sean McGlynn \*

Charles Pattison \*

Jim Stevenson \*

Tom Swihart \*

Tom Taylor \*

Rob Williams

WSA Advisors

Anthony Gaudio

Pam Hall

Julie Harrington

Bob Henderson

Bob Knight

Pam McVety

Dan Pennington

Bob Thompson \*

Guests

Madeleine Carr \*

Amy Duke \*

Casey McKinlay \*

Demi Nichols \*

Jeff Pridde \*

Appendix C

Wakulla Springs Alliance

Treasurer Report

June 19, 2015

Checking Balance (May 31, 2015 Statement)

$3,006.59

Activity this month on statement:

Deposits None

Withdrawal: $140.00 for reimbursement to Tom Taylor to for incorporation of WSA (78.75) and WSA annual report (61.25). This was reported last month and now appears on statement.

**Current Balance** **$2,866.59**

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Kessler

Treasurer

Appendix D

**Information on the Woodville Karst Plain Project**

**About The WKPP (from the GUE Website)**

The Woodville Karst Plain Project (WKPP) is a non-profit affiliate of Global Underwater Explorers (GUE). The mission of the WKPP is to explore, survey, connect and protect the flooded underwater cave systems of North Florida's Woodville Karst Plain. To this end, the WKPP promotes public awareness, education and scientific discovery through exploration and research support within these flooded underground cave systems. Through partnerships with state, federal and private landowners, the WKPP is uniquely positioned to facilitate scientific research and the gathering of valuable data. In turn, researchers, resource managers, policy makers and landowners can formulate necessary and responsible land use decisions to protect these unique and treasured resources for future generations.

**New as of August 2009**: [The Wakulla-Leon Sinks Cave System on Google Earth](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/files/WKPP/Wakulla.kml) (right-click and "Save Link/Target As..." and then open with Google Earth)

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Information**   * [Updates](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/updates) * [History](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/history) * [Procedures](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/procedures) * [Equipment](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/equipment) * [Decompression](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/decompression) * [Research and Science](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/researchscience) * [Contacts](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/team-contacts) * [Sponsors](http://www.globalunderwaterexplorers.org/projects/WKPP/sponsors) |

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Woodville Karst Plain Project** or WKPP, grew out of a [cave diving](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cave_diving) research and exploration group established in 1985 and incorporated in 1990 (by Bill Gavin and [Bill Main](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Main), later joined by Parker Turner, Lamar English and Bill McFaden, at the time the chairman of the NACD Exploration and Survey Committee) to map the underwater cave systems underlying the [Woodville Karst Plain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain), a 450-square-mile (1,200 km2) area that runs from [Tallahassee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallahassee), [Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida), [U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) to the [Gulf of Mexico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_of_Mexico) and includes numerous [first magnitude springs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_%28hydrosphere%29), including [Wakulla Springs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wakulla_Springs), and the [Leon Sinks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Sinks) Cave System, the longest underwater cave in the United States.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#cite_note-AAUS2008-1)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#cite_note-2)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#cite_note-Gulden-3)

WKPP is the only organization currently allowed to dive some of these caves - which are all on State, Federal, or private land - due to the extreme nature of the systems and the discipline required to safely explore them, although these caves were explored extensively prior to the establishment of the WKPP. This is a controversial issue, as many people think these caves should be open to the public or, at the least, to other qualified cave diving groups and individuals. Recently, during 2007, one State-owned entrance of the Leon Sinks cave system has been reopened to other qualified cave divers.

WKPP divers hold every distance record in underwater cave diving. WKPP director [Casey McKinlay](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Casey_McKinlay&action=edit&redlink=1) and his regular [dive buddy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddy_system), [Jarrod Jablonski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jarrod_Jablonski) hold the world's record for the greatest distance from air in a cave dive - 23,810 feet (7,260 m) each way.

The data gathered by WKPP divers has allowed planners a better definition of what to expect from the underground [aquifer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquifer) system and how best to handle issues relating to such things as surface water runoff and other [nonpoint source pollution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonpoint_source_pollution) issues.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#cite_note-NPR2013-4) WKPP mapping has resulted in the State of Florida and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Agriculture) establishing a "greenway" surrounding the Leon Sinks cave system and a "protection zone" for [Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Ball_Wakulla_Springs_State_Park), as well as numerous improvements in water management district operations, DOT road-building, and development planning.

## Contents

* [1 DIR diving](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#DIR_diving)
* [2 Current research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#Current_research)
* [3 References](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#References)
* [4 External links](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodville_Karst_Plain_Project#External_links)