

Friends Of Istokpoga

Newsire

Friends Of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.

PO Box 155, Lorida, FL 33857-0155

Phone: 863--465-6913 FAX: 863-465-2982

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Hydrilla Control According to Dr. Haller

The Annual Meeting of Friends Of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. was held on March 30, 2000 at the Lorida Community Center.

Dr., Bill Haller was our guest speaker. Dr. Haller is an aquatic plant expert at University of Florida, and talked about hydrilla control and research being done on hydrilla. His talk did not indicate we had a very good chance of finding a better solution in the near future.

One important point that was brought up is that hydrilla is not a significant factor in the build up of muck.

If you didn't make it to this meeting, you really missed a good one.

Election of Officers

Our annual election of Directors was held at our meeting on March 30. All of the directors were reelected to serve another year.

Following the regular meeting the directors met to elect the officers for the year. The results are:

Bill Dwinell, President,
Chris Monroe, Vice-president,
and Debbie Galloway,
Secretary / Treasurer.

The directors are Jim Berry, William "Dub" Cummins, Don Linton, and Jim Wilkins.

Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Plan

- By Bill Dwinell

I have been attending the monthly meetings of the South Florida Water Management District, representing Friends of Istokpoga, to provide input into the 20 year water supply plan for the Kissimmee Basin, which Lake Istokpoga falls in.

The final plan was presented to the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board on April 13, 2000 and was adopted.

Over the year I have significantly influenced the direction and ultimate recommendations of the plan, but there are still many concerns with this plan. Most, if not all, of these concerns will require public hearings before any action is taken, so we will have the opportunity to further influence the final decisions at that time.

The 20 year plan actually only has detail recommendations for the next five years. Below are my notes for the comments I made to the Governing Board at their workshop on April 12, 2000:

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD NOTES

1. My comments are addressed to the Istokpoga/Indian Prairie Basin portions of the Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Plan only.
 - i. The Plan has come a long way and many of the issues that were raised have been addressed
 - ii. The Plan doesn't accomplish much, but does lay out a strategy for the Istokpoga/Indian Prairie Basin
2. My major concern is the structure of the plan leaves Lake Istokpoga seriously exposed if any element of the plan fails to happen as expected. One example is the recommendation to use the pumps at R-207 and R-208 as the primary source of water for the Indian Prairie Basin. This requires a number of issues to be resolved before this takes affect. If any of the issues is not resolved the

- plan is broken and Lake Istokpoga will be severely impacted.
3. The plan is based on 1-in-10 year drought, preceded with normal rainfall. Historical data for the Lake Istokpoga Basin do not substantiate this premise. And in fact indicate a more serious situation is more common. This will force water restrictions that are not addressed within the plan
 4. With this in mind, the pumps proposed in Recommendation 4.1, should be permanent pumps, not temporary pumps and an operational plan should be developed that addresses their use during these drought conditions. The pumps could also come into play if any of the other plan items fall through or are delayed.
 5. Strategy 5.0 calls for the lifting of the current moratorium on the use of additional surface water from the Indian Prairie Basin. The plan alludes to "several items that must be addressed before it will be lifted". A definitive list of these items should be added to the plan. Only two are currently listed. And the way the plan currently reads, the goal appears to be to lift the moratorium within two years, not resolve the issues then lift the moratorium.
 6. I requested that the plan include a recommendation to place the CERP reservoir in an area that would help resolve some of the Istokpoga Basin water issues. This was agreed

- to by South Florida Water Management District representatives on 4/10/2000 in a meeting with Guy Maxcy, Highlands County Commissioner.
7. Navigation issues continue to crop up any time the water level drops below 39 feet, and gets worse as the level drops to 37.5 feet. I would like South Florida Water Management District to consider a project to dredge the canals in Lake Istokpoga in concert with the proposed drawdown. Deepening the canals would remove most of the negative public criticism that occurs whenever the lake levels drop. This would serve a multitude of problems, including increasing the storage capability within the lake, reduce impacts of low water levels, make periodic environmental lowering of the lake a more practical alternative and permit lake management to become a more environmentally sound process.
 8. In closing, I would like to complement the Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Planning team for their hard work and their strong desire to work with the committee members to resolve open issues. I would urge the Governing Board to resolve the concerns addressed before you today, before approving this plan.

Other speakers included Clell Ford, Highlands County

Lakes Manager, and Beacham Furse, FFWC.

The final version of the plan will be available around the end of May. Call or write to the South Florida Water Management District if you would like a copy of the complete plan.

Ask Your Officers

This section of our Newswire is dedicated to answering your Questions. If you have questions, E-mail them to us at: friendsofistokpoga@hotmail.com

We will publish the answers on our web site and in our next newsletter for those of you that do not have Internet access.

You can also mail them to:

Friends Of Istokpoga
ATTN.: Newswire Editor
PO Box 155
Lorida, Florida 33857-0155

Friends Of Istokpoga Web site now available

Be sure to check out the Friends Of Istokpoga web site at: friendsofistokpoga.homestead.com

Our web site now contains a pictorial ride down Istokpoga Canal and Arbuckle Creek. Be sure to take time to look at these beautiful canals.

We hope you will take time to sign our guest book while you are checking it out.

Don't Have a computer? Well, did you know you can go to any public library and get access to the Internet, and see our web site? You can! And it's FREE.

Tour of Alligator Lake Drawdown

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (FFWC) invited members of the Lake Istokpoga Management Committee and the Officers and Directors of Friends Of Istokpoga to take an airboat tour of Alligator Lake and a few other lakes connected to Alligator Lake and see the work being done on these lakes as part of a FFWC drawdown. Debbie Galloway, Jim Berry, Jim Wilkins and I were able to take advantage of this offer.

The lakes were lowered about four feet below the high water level in early March, and shore line cleanup began almost immediately, using back hoes, bulldozers, dump trucks, etc.

While the work isn't slated to be complete until June, what we saw was pretty impressive. We saw areas of the lake that have not been done yet. These areas were comprised mostly of shoreline vegetation and muck. There was very little

tussock, so in that sense it was different from Lake Istokpoga.

The areas that had been cleaned were pretty impressive, in that they looked like beach fronts. Keep in mind that most of this would be covered with water when the lake was raised to its normal level, but still this would make ideal spawning beds for our fish population.

The down side is that there were many boats and docks that were high and dry, with no way to get in the water. Other, better prepared homeowners had their boats on trailers with access at the boat ramps.

We all want to thank Beacham Furse, Mike Hulon, and Tom Champeau for the tour.

Did You Know?

Did you know bass in Lake Istokpoga spawn from December until June?

Did you know most of the spawn falls in February and March?

Did you know that bass can spawn more than once in a season? Did you know that bass do not drop all their eggs when they spawn? Did you know that the eggs they don't drop are absorbed back into their bodies? Did you know you can catch fish in June that will still have eggs in them? Did you know that hydrilla

tubers can live more than seven years?

Friends Of Istokpoga gets water release stopped

Friends Of Istokpoga was able to convince South Florida Water Management District to stop the release of water from Lake Istokpoga in early March and help preserve the bass spawn for this year. They were able to back pump water from Lake Okechobee to satisfy the needs of their permitted water users.

Releases in March could significantly harm the spawn according to Beacham Furse, FFWC. By stopping the release, Beacham stated he believes we should have a good year class this year.

Thanks to a Member

The Board of Directors would like to thank **Terry Scrogam** for his hard work collecting donations for the Friends Of Istokpoga Cookbooks at the American Legion Post in Lake Placid. Terry brought in \$175 in donations for 25 cookbooks!