

Caloosahatchee River Science Workshop Overview

Florida Gulf Coast University's Coastal Watershed Institute, in association with the Consensus Building Institute and the South Florida Water Management District, is sponsoring a technical science workshop November 19-20, 2013, on the Caloosahatchee system. The workshop, to be held at Florida Gulf Coast University, has the following main purposes:

- Briefly introduce the major environmental challenges facing the Caloosahatchee system and review the pertinent scientific information relevant to the management challenges
- Discuss the primary indicators for assessing environmental condition and tracking progress
- Identify gaps related to the primary indicators where more information would improve the ability to manage and restore the system

The agenda will be structured to include both technical presentations, as well as facilitated stakeholder dialogue. We anticipate a mix of full group discussions and smaller breakout sessions to foster more in-depth conversation. Below is a brief agenda overview. A more detailed agenda, including a listing of panelists invited by FGCU, will be made available a few weeks prior to the workshop itself.

Day One: November 19, 2013 (9 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

- **Setting the Scene:** Understand the context and primary drivers that shape the Caloosahatchee system and its major ecological stressors.
- **Why Ecological Indicators:** Understand what constitutes good ecological indicators and how can they help us manage the system more effectively; take stock of current indicators.
- **Ecological Indicators for Benthic Communities:** Consider the strengths and limitations of tapegrass, oysters and seagrass as ecological indicators; identify key gaps and uncertainties.
- **Ecological Indicators for Water Column Communities:** Consider the strengths and limitations of phytoplankton (including red tide), zooplankton, blue-green algae and drift algae as ecological indicators; identify key gaps and uncertainties.

Day Two: November 20, 2013 (9 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

- **Ecological Indicators for Water Column Communities:** Continue discussion of ecological indicators for water column communities from Day One.
- **Other Ecological Indicators:** Consider the strengths and limitations of other potential indicators of system health, including ichthyofauna (e.g., small-tooted sawfish, red drum, etc.), invertebrates (blue crabs, bivalves), manatees, oxbows and others; identify key gaps and uncertainties.
- **Bringing it All Together:** Take stock of key gaps and research needs based on workshop deliberations; consider indicators that, taken together, might represent a key set or constellation of indicators that reflect more the "system" as a whole.

For further information on the workshop, please contact Tim Bryant, Program Assistant, Coastal Watershed Institute, FGCU, at 239-590-7215 or via email at tbryant@fgcu.edu.