

# ❖ RIVER NEWS ❖

Serving Tampa, Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County

Dec 02/Jan 03

A Publication of the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board & Technical Advisory Council

## River Flow Picks Up With Rainfall Boost from El Nino Effect

The winter months in Florida are usually dry but that doesn't seem to be the case this year. The El Nino effect in the Pacific Ocean causes the warming of ocean waters along the equator which greatly increases the jet stream and available moisture in the air. This effect is influencing climatic conditions half a world away, bringing more rain to the Hillsborough River basin area during the early winter months of 2002 than in recent years. Rainfall during the late fall and early winter months are more often measured in tenths of an inch. However, during December alone, more than 13 inches of rain has fallen and more is predicted. Recent historical average rainfall for December has been around 1 inch.

Flows in the Hillsborough River have been at high tilt during December as a result of the rainfall.



December releases at dam creates strong flow downstream

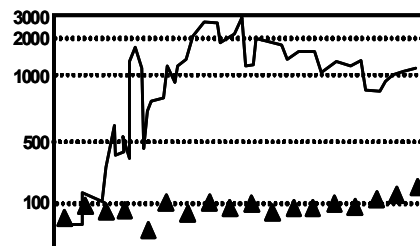


## Surfs Up on the Hillsborough!

Discharge from the reservoir to the lower river has been exceedingly high for this time of year and was necessary to help relieve high-water conditions upstream. In fact, some water had to be diverted through the Tampa By-Pass Canal.

Recent rainfalls have caused consumption to drop as well. Still, we all need to remember to conserve and make the most out of this early Christmas present from Mother Nature! Drier times are ahead at some point and we need to make the most of what we've got for now.

## ALWAYS CONSERVE!



Discharge, Cubic feet/second 12/1- 12/24/02  
USGS Monitoring Gage 02304500, Tampa Dam  
▲ = Median daily streamflow based on 63 yr. record.

## TAMPA COUNCIL EXPLORES RIVER SPEED ZONES

On December 12th Tampa City Council was briefed by Captain Alan Richards of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on how the state evaluates and goes about approving marine craft regulatory zones. Captain Richard provided Tampa Council with an overview of the types of zones available and what each type of zone would mean in regard to craft operation. He also reviewed reasons for establishing regulatory zones and the steps that needed to be taken by local governments to make them legally enforceable.

Tampa City Council then focused on existing zones in the Hillsborough River and received general direction from Captain Richards as to what steps should be taken to make sure all the zones and signs associated with craft regulatory zones on the river are in compliance with state standards and criteria. No new zones were suggested and most existing zones will stand. However the zone between MLK Boulevard/Hillsborough Avenue is likely to be repealed and the zone in Seddon Channel is to be reconsidered. As you boat on the Hillsborough River, keep aware of possible changes in craft regulatory zones.



Your River Board wants to hear from YOU. Call the River Hotline,

## TAC MEETINGS SUMMARY

The TAC met November 19th at Lowry Park. The primary agenda items presented and discussed were:

- City of Tampa Parks plans to reconfigure recreational facilities in Lowry Park along the river due to the Lowry Park Zoo expansion;
- City of Tampa Parks plans to begin restoration of the Riverside Garden Park shoreline;
- Bank of America's redevelopment plans for Tampa Heights along the river and;
- Florida Audubon's Hillsborough River Greenways Task Force Frog Listening Network program.

Several citizens attended and commented on the need for a more visible law enforcement presence on the river and to support existing craft regulatory zones.

The TAC met on December 17th at the EPC. Items presented and discussed at this meeting include:

- Hillsborough County's potable water protection ordinance;
- Relaxation of emergency water restrictions for Tampa and Hillsborough County;
- Recent river levels.

The January 21st TAC meeting will be held at the Southwest Florida Water Management District on US Highway 301 North. The February 18th TAC meeting is scheduled to be held at the Tampa Port Authority. Both meetings begin at 1:30 p.m.

To review the most up-to-date River Board and TAC agendas visit the Planning Commission's website [www.theplanningcommission.org](http://www.theplanningcommission.org) and click on the *Agendas* under the River Board/TAC logo or contact the River Board/TAC staff at 273-3774, extension 323.

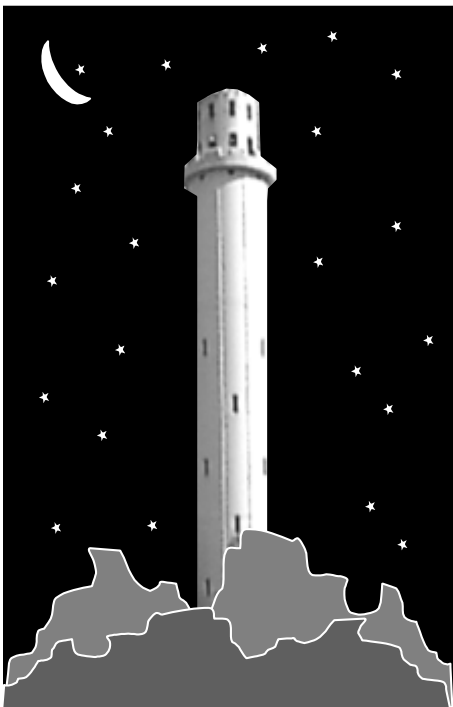
## 15th Annual River & Waterway Clean Up Snags Tons of Trash

On Saturday, November 23rd, the City of Tampa Mayor's 15th Annual River & Waterway Clean Up resulted in 6-7 tons of trash and debris being picked up along shorelines and in waterways, including the Hillsborough River.

Over 1,000 participants donated their time to work in and along the water. Among volunteers taking part in the clean up were groups from high schools, city and county agencies' staffs, a Gasparilla crew and the Parrot Heads.

Besides the usual clean up of trash and debris, volunteers took on the chore of weeding out invasive plant species along the shoreline.

Thanks to everyone that helped to put on this event and all those that participated!



**COMING SOON  
to  
A NIGHT SKY NEAR YOU**

### Quick River Updates:

**River Tower Park-** Progress is being made by the Tampa Parks Department to light up the Sulphur Springs Tower. Plans to light the structure at night have been given the go-ahead by the Historic Preservation Commission, lighting studies are complete and the fixtures are on order. The City is working to get power to the site and begin installation of the lights.

**Stormwater Treatment -** The Tampa Stormwater Department is planning installation of a number of stormwater treatment devices along the Hillsborough River. These devices will help remove solid particulates such as trash and debris as well as skim oil and other undesirable fluids from the water's surface. They should help improve the lower river's water quality.

### **Storms and Shattles to Serve on River Board**

Commissioner Ronda Storms retained the County's representation on the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board for 2003. This will be Commissioner Storms' second year on the board.

Newly elected Councilwoman Linda Shattles will represent the City of Temple Terrace during her first year on Temple Terrace City Council.

Commissioner Storms and Councilwoman Shattles join Tampa Councilman Bob Buckhorn who serves as the River Board's current chair. The River board is scheduled to meet on Friday, January 24, 2003 at 1:00 p.m. at the Environmental Protection Commission.



## County's Ordinance Update Proposes to Protect Hillsborough River /Tributaries

Hillsborough County staff has been working steadily to update its Wellhead Protection Ordinance which has been expanded to include other potable water supply sources in the county including the Hillsborough River and some its main tributaries. The intent of the ordinance is to control the introduction of activities or substances that could pollute county potable water supplies and to address uses that already exist.

The ordinance originally adopted in 1992 was designed specifically to protect lands surrounding publicly owned wells/wellfields that provide the bulk of the public's water supply. The concept was to create a barrier zone or resource protection area that would preclude certain activities from taking place and/or control the use of certain substances that could harm the water quality in the county. The area of the zones were established by calculating how long it would take a pollutant, traveling through the ground, to reach the potable water supply source over a ten year period.

The proposed updated version of the ordinance has been expanded beyond the wells/wellfields to include all sources of potable water supply, including the Hillsborough River and its major tributaries. Improved technology in monitoring and predicting pollutant movement underground has resulted in some reduction in area of some of the resource protection areas in some parts of the county. In regard to the Hillsborough River and major tributaries, the basis for the zone in which activities and substance use would be under scrutiny is the 100 year floodplain. If the proposed ordinance is adopted it will result in greater protection for the Hillsborough River that was not included in the original ordinance.

For further information about how this proposed ordinance will protect the Hillsborough River and other potable water supplies in Hillsborough County contact Mr. Dan Blood at Hillsborough County Planning & Growth Management Department at 276-8645.

## Keep Your Storm Drains Clear

People often call and ask "How can I help the river." In addition to conserving water use one of the best ways to 'Help the Hillsborough' is to take to the streets, literally, and help the local governments keep a check on trash and debris and leaves and limbs from making its way to our storm sewer systems.

Stormwater pollution has been the most prevalent problem for the Hillsborough and other waterways throughout the county for decades. Especially non-source pollution like trash and yard waste. Not only does its presence detract from our communities' appearance, it can clog the storm drainage systems and create an unsafe and unhealthy environment.

So when you have a little time, make your way to the curb and pick up whatever is in the street or guttering in front of your house. It not only cleans up the environment but is also a good way to get some exercise and you may even get to know your neighbors better!



## YESTERDAY & TODAY



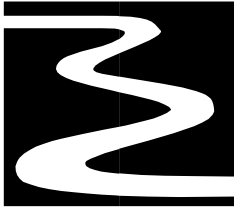
Courtesy USF/  
Burgett Bros. collection



The allure of travelling up and down the Hillsborough River hasn't changed much over time except that now most craft on the river are motorized and the river's shoreline is more fully developed. The Hillsborough River will continue to be part of the community as a recreational asset as well as a significant potable water supply and invaluable wildlife habitat resource.

# RIVER NEWS

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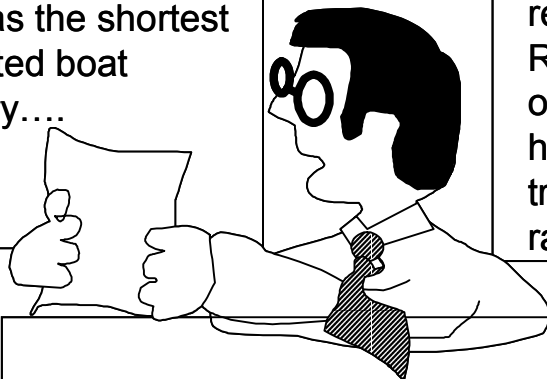
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## DECEMBER NEWS 2002....

This just in...with downstream flow from the Tampa dam ripping along at near record levels, the 2002 Hillsborough River boat parade set a world's record as the shortest and fastest lighted boat parade in history....



...and in a related story...Santa was reported to have been accidentally pulled into a CDS unit's vortex somewhere in Temple Terrace. He was rescued by his trusty helper Rudolph. When asked about his ordeal by Mrs. Claus, Santa told her it was ironic because his troubles started and ended with rain, dear.

**The Snooze You Lose**

**NEWS DESK**

**Happy New Year!**