

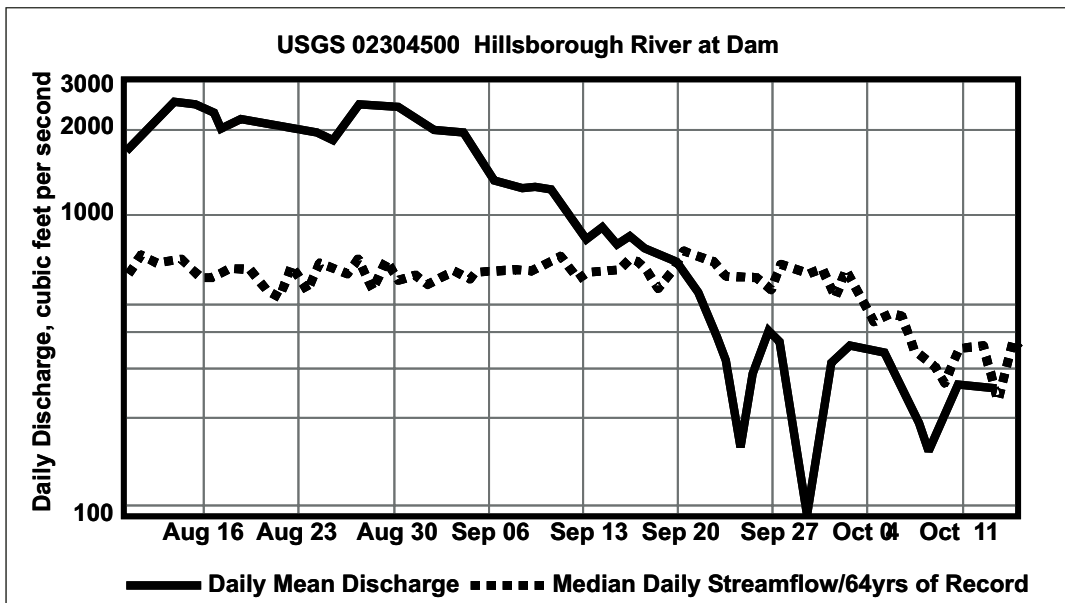
# Partners in Planning

A PUBLICATION OF THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CITY-COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

## RIVER NEWS

Serving Tampa, Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County

- Publications**
- Newsletter
  - Permits Report
  - Economic & Demographic Summary
  - Tampa Neighborhood News
  - RIVER NEWS



### Don't Slack Off Water Conservation

Its that time of year once again when rainfall begins to taper off and the rate of flow in the Hillsborough River begins to decline as a result of reduced precipitation in the area. While the Hillsborough River continues to show a moderate flow at the City of Tampa dam, seasonally drier conditions will dictate that freshwater flow into the lower river will slow to a trickle and then likely stop. It happens this way nearly every year.

The Hillsborough River area was lucky over the summer to have had record, or near record rainfalls, replenishing the river and bringing groundwater levels back to what is considered normal or above ranges. With these rains, the river responded nicely with record non-stop flows for much of the summer months. Rainfall totals for late summer set record levels even without a

hurricane. But that is all changing now that Fall is coming...and it is just around the corner.

Drier, cooler temperatures should begin to prevail over the area which translates into less rainfall and lowered river levels. This change to cooler, drier weather can benefit the river. It minimizes the natural conditions that promote one of the greatest losses of river water, evaporation. With lowered temperatures, less water is likely to escape into the atmosphere. Cooler weather also means plants need much less water to thrive. So as temperatures start to dip, cut back on watering lawns and potted plants. They don't need a lot of moisture during cooler months. This water saving can also help maintain the river at a safe level for a longer period of time, until the rains return.

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# TAC Meets to Take Up Issues

## TAC Meeting Summaries

The TAC met on September 16th at the City of Temple Terrace Public Works Department. Among discussion/reports at the meeting were:

: A briefing regarding the Crystal Springs/Two Rivers Ranch permits status.

A briefing on local jurisdictions/Tampa Port Authority plans to institute a marine contractor licensing program.

Review/consideration of Tampa Port Authority Applications.

Discussion regarding the importance of incorporating stormwater treatment/retrofitting by local jurisdictions when designing stormwater projects that direct stormwater to the Hillsborough River, regardless of project capacity.

Discussion on the canoe launch expansion proposed at Rowlett Park.

A report on recent Hillsborough River levels.

A status report on community outreach projects including discussion about the development of an educational brochure for community youth, focused on the effects of pollution on the river.

The October 21st TAC meeting was held outside at Lowry Park along the Hillsborough River. Items presented and discussed included:

An update on resolution of the Two Rivers Ranch/Crystal Springs permits.

A briefing on program development for the Crystal Springs Preserve Environmental Studies Center.

Review/consideration of Tampa Port Authority Minor Work Permit Applications.

Update report on Tampa's River Tower Park plans and progress made to light the Sulphur Springs Tower on that park site.

Briefing on the River Board/TAC educational brochure development.

Briefing on recent Hillsborough River levels.

The November 18 TAC meeting will be held at the SWFWMD Tampa Service Office and the December 16 meeting will be held at the EPC in Ybor City. Both meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. To review River Board and TAC agendas visit our website at [www.hillsboroughriver.org](http://www.hillsboroughriver.org) and click on *Agendas* under the River Board/TAC logo or contact staff at 273-3774, extension 323.

## District Ok's Plan for More Withdrawals at Crystal Springs, Less at Two Rivers Ranch

The legal challenges blocking the proposal to increase withdrawals at Crystal Springs and reduce pumping at Two Rivers Ranch were settled over the past couple of months. The challenges lodged by Plant City, Pasco County and *Friends of the River* were worked out prior to actually going into a hearing process with the state. Concerns by Plant City and Pasco County centered on what some viewed as a transfer of water availability from Two Rivers Ranch to Crystal Springs. The applicant, wanting to increase withdrawals at the spring for expanded commercial bottled water production, owns both the spring and the ranch and holds water use permits for each location. While the proposed increased withdrawal at the spring would be offset by reduced water use at the ranch, which is used for agricultural purposes, it was deemed not to be an exchange, but defined as mitigation. A water exchange would be illegal under current state water law.

This murky legal distinction led *Friends of the River* to persist in objecting to the proposal on the grounds that it could ultimately affect the amount of freshwater flow making its way to the lower Hillsborough River, downstream of the dam. The applicant and *Friends of the River* came to an agreement allowing the District discretion in monitoring the impact on water flow to the Hillsborough River in relation to water use at Two Rivers Ranch, and to 'set aside' 10-percent of the permitted ranch withdrawal to assure a future minimum flow for the river.

Over all, the plan results in a net decrease in the amount of water allowed to be withdrawn from the river system.

## Manatee Awareness Alert



Manatees, in greater numbers, should be heading towards warmer waters, including inland waterways like the Hillsborough River, when temperatures start to drop significantly. This means pleasure craft on waterways should be alert to the possibility that these slow-moving marine mammals could be in the vicinity.

Manatees are **ALWAYS** in the Hillsborough River, YEAR-ROUND in small numbers. Young manatees have been observed in the Hillsborough River frequently with adults. Please watch for manatees. When you take your boat out this winter, **be sure the only thing you hit is the water!**

State Manatee Winter Season is designated as November 15 - March 31.

**To report an injured, dead, harassed or orphaned manatee, call: 1-888-404-FWCC.**

***Manatee season is fast approaching...  
Be sure your boat isn't. Go Slow!***





## **Tower Lights Power Up & River Tower Park Update**

The Tampa Parks & Recreation Department continues to move along with the Sulphur Springs water tower lighting project at River Tower Park. The ground lights that will illuminate the lower portion of the tower are in place and functional. The upper ring of lighting fixtures has been ordered and work is underway to facilitate their installation. The electrical connection for the tower structure lighting has been made. Interior work, including cleaning up the inside and installing a ladder to allow for maintenance of the top ring of lights, is progressing. No date for completion has been announced but the City Parks and Recreation Department has been working diligently on accomplishing this project.

The project to light the Sulphur Springs tower has not been as easy as it may sound. Since the tower structure has a historic designation, the staff working on the project has taken great care to ensure the structure's historic integrity is maintained. That has meant no physical alterations can occur that would alter the structure. The Tampa Parks and Recreation staff are to be commended on meeting the challenge of accomplishing the lighting of a significant Tampa historic structure at night for all to enjoy while respecting the structure's historic status. We are all looking forward to an announcement for an event to celebrate the tower's lighting coming in a few months.

Preliminary plans for the design of River Tower Park continue to be evaluated by parks staff. The 13.5-acre tract of land along the river will be a passive park site, likely planted with areas of Florida-friendly vegetation. The plantings and tower will be accessible by a maze of walkways. Plans may include access to the park from the river provided by a small dock. Other passive uses may be considered as well. This site will be connected to the Sulphur Springs Park and Pool to the east by a walkway that will go under Interstate 275.

Once the preliminary plans for the park are ready for review, the park's plans will be available for public comment and input.

## **TAMPA MAYOR'S 2003 HILLSBOROUGH RIVER & WATERWAYS CLEAN UP EVENT**

Make plans now to join Mayor Pam Iorio for the 2003 City of Tampa Mayor's Annual Hillsborough River & Waterways clean up scheduled for Saturday, November 22, 2003. Those planning to take part in this annual event should meet at the Lowry Park boat ramp at 8:00 a.m. High school groups, college groups and individuals are encouraged to participate in what has become one of the largest annual volunteer events in Tampa. All volunteers will receive a complimentary breakfast and lunch and T-shirts will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-registration is preferred by calling the Mayor's Beautification Program at 221-8733, or by fax at 221-0222. E-mail registration requests can be made at [info@mbptree.org](mailto:info@mbptree.org). For more information about this year's event, contact Erin Budde at 221-8733. A new follow-up event, *Rollin' on the River*, will be held from noon to 4:00 p.m. at Lowry Park following the clean up. Come join in the fun! Hope to see you at the clean up and *Rollin' on the River*!

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## **Tampa Parks & Recreation Director Ross Ferlita, Announces Retirement**



Long-time Parks and Recreation Department Director, Ross Ferlita, announced his intentions to retire last month. Mr. Ferlita first started at the City as the Park's Department's assistant director in 1974 and was named director in 1978. He was recently named director of the newly-merged Parks and Recreation Departments. Prior to working for the City, Mr. Ferlita gained some valuable public service experience working at the Planning Commission.

During Mr. Ferlita's tenure, Tampa's parkland expanded from 800 acres to around 2,600 acres. Parcels acquired by the City during Mr. Ferlita's time at the Park's Department include small tracts of land that constitute the series of small public spaces known as the *Ribbon of Green* in downtown Tampa to a 13.5-acre tract in Sulphur Springs, now River Tower Park.

Mr. Ferlita has also been a proponent for a city-wide greenways and trails system that would provide a recreational connectivity between destination points such as schools, parks and various appropriate locations along the Hillsborough River. Mr. Ferlita was also instrumental in the supporting the new Sulphur Springs Park pool facility which serves several central-Tampa neighborhoods's recreational needs.

Ross Ferlita has been a steward of the environment and a true friend of the Hillsborough River. Hopefully he will be able to take some time now to visit the river more frequently and enjoy its quiet beauty and know that he has played in it's protection for future generations to come is acknowledged and appreciated.



**YOUR River Board  
wants to hear from YOU!  
Call the River Hotline at  
272-5940**



Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board  
& Technical Advisory Council  
601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 18th Floor  
PO Box 1110  
Tampa, FL 33602 1150

Robert B. Hunter, FAICP - Executive Director/HCCCPC

*When wildlife adapts to urban encroachment for self-preservation.....*

Now who's the turkey?!!!....

I know that Florida turkey went this way... where did he get to?!!

Yeah, I was sure his number was up!

