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A PUBLICATION OF THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CITY-COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

RIVER NEWS

Serving Tampa, Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County



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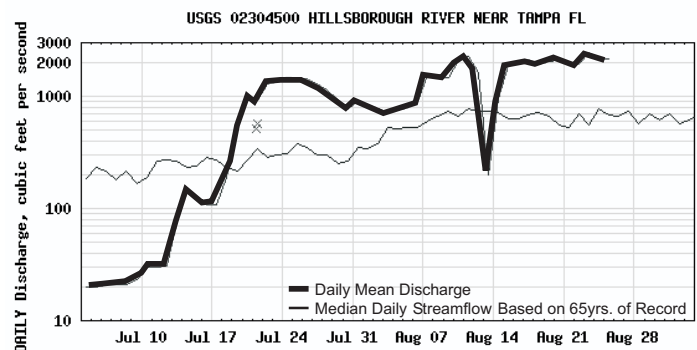
River Roars Back to Life With Summer Rains

The Hillsborough River made its normal summer rebound which could be heard at the dam located in Rowlett Park as water roared through and over the structure. Consistent rains in the region contributed to high-flow conditions in the river over the past month. August rainfall levels totaled over 20 inches which helped to swell tributaries feeding the river's flow. As a result, flows at the dam were well above the median daily stream flows recorded over the past 65 years.

Freshwater inflows into the lower Hillsborough River help to produce a flushing action, cleansing the lower river and extending the influence of the freshwater further downstream. This fresh water inflow into the river below the dam probably

improved the water quality in the river, increasing the dissolved oxygen levels.

Rainfall for the next couple of months should help the river to continue to have a sustained flow downstream of the dam. Even so, we all need to keep in mind that fall and winter months are just around the corner and bring drier weather conditions with them. Even in times of plentiful rainfall we need to be mindful of how we use our water and to conserve at every opportunity that we have.



TAC Meetings Summary

The Technical Advisory Council met on August 17th at the Tampa Union Train Station.. Among discussion/reports at the meeting were:

: A briefing by Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County (EPC) staff regarding water quality monitoring programs focused on the Hillsborough River and water quality testing methodologies.

An update report on local governments' efforts to establish a county-wide marine contractor specialty licensing program .

Review of three Tampa Port Authority Minor Work Permit Applications.

A status report on recent Hillsborough River levels.

An update on River Board/TAC educational brochure distribution.

The TAC meeting on September 21st at the Tampa Union Train Station is scheduled to address the following issues:

A briefing on the August 27, 2004 Hillsborough River Board meeting.

A report on the Draft Report on The Determination of Minimum Flows for Sulphur Springs, Tampa, FL .

Review of Tampa Port Authority minor work permits.

Update Report on the Establishment of Marine Contractor Specialty Licensing in Hillsborough County.

A status report on recent Hillsborough River levels.

Briefing on Water Quality/Epidemiological Issues Related to Re-Use Water as a Source for a Minimum Downstream Flow.

Update report on Tampa Cruise-A-Cade site status.

Other issues that may be brought before the TAC by the public.

All 2004 TAC meeting will be held in the 2nd floor conference room of the Tampa Union Train Station, 601 N. Nebraska Avenue, Tampa, unless otherwise noticed. Meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. To review River Board and TAC agendas visit our website at www.hillsboroughriver.org and click on *Agendas* under the River Board/TAC logo or contact staff at 273-3774, extension 323.



Saturday, November 13, 2004...Hold That Date

Mark your calendar now for a big event coming to Sulphur Springs in November. On Saturday, November 13th, from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m., the City of Tampa will be hosting the very first community celebration at Tampa River Tower Park in Sulphur Springs. There will be music and maybe even some fireworks to mark the official lighting of the historic Sulphur Springs Tower.



The City of Tampa undertook this project about two years ago at the urging by the community to light up this significant landmark. The Sulphur Springs Tower is situated along the banks of the Hillsborough River and is located on the 14-acre tract of land known as River Tower Park which is owned by the City. Plans for the land is as a passive park site along the river. Ultimately, there are efforts underway to connect the River Tower Park with Sulphur Springs Pool & Park by creating a connection under I-275.

So, get your picnic baskets and blankets out and plan to attend this exciting lighting!

July Algae Bloom Brings Large Fish Kill in River

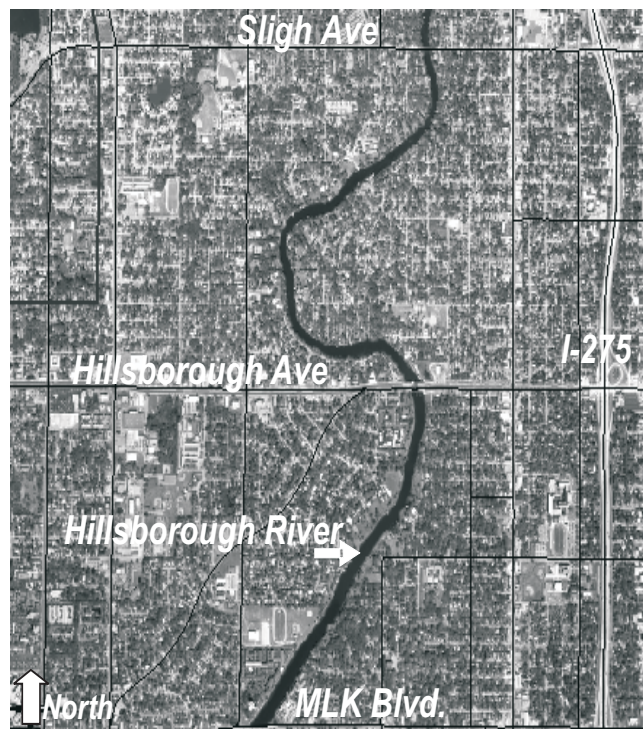
The week of July 14, 2004 will stand out for some riverfront residents as a time they'd rather not re-live. That week an algae bloom and resulting fish kill hit the Hillsborough River between Sligh Avenue and Dr. MLK Boulevard.

Staff of the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County (EPC) responded quickly to calls from riverfront residents and others that saw the growing number of dead fish in the river. Initial tests were inconclusive but suspicions for the fish kill focused either on a sewer line breach in the area or an algae bloom.

Further test detected microscopic algae known as gymnodinium, a common algae but one not often found in rivers where currents aerates the water and often break up the blooms. However weather conditions at this time were ripe for such an outbreak. Warm weather, plenty of sunshine, recent rains that washed additional nutrients into the river all combined to make conditions right for a bloom to form. In addition, little to no flow in the river contributed to a lack of current and aeration.

Algae blooms, like this one, often grow quickly. As it does, part of the fuel for the algae's grow is oxygen. The algae took up the oxygen in the water causing the fish in the area to suffocate, causing the fish kill.

In the future, if you become aware of unusual or dangerous conditions in the river's water quality, contact the EPC at 272-5960 to report what you are observing, or contact the River Board/TAC staff at 272-5940 to make a report. We all are the eyes and ears for the river's well-being!



General Area Map of Algae Bloom



However local government and jurisdictions are responsible for licensing specific specialty contractors. The three local governments within the county, including the county, Tampa, and Temple Terrace, establish construction contractor licensing programs within their governmental jurisdictions. They have yet to come to agreement to support a mandatory contractor licensure program throughout all three jurisdictions for those who would do work on marine-related projects anywhere within the county.

The Tampa Port Authority, with support from the TAC, has encouraged the local governments to establish a county-wide marine contractor licensing program. However, this isn't to say that there aren't some fine contractors out there who already do this kind of work. What it is aimed at is establishing a way to educate those who are unfamiliar with marine construction project or don't follow the standards required in marine construction projects. It is intended to help protect the property owner, the local jurisdictions and the environment.

Licensing Builders of Docks, Boat Lifts & Seawalls

The benefits of having a contractor licensing procedure in place for those that work in marine construction within Hillsborough County, Tampa and Temple Terrace are many. Primarily, it would add a level of accountability. It would help protect the property owner when such a structure is installed. It would help to assure that the individual/company doing this type of work is qualified and following construction standards for these types of projects.

Establishing a contractor license specific to marine construction should help curtail instances of shoddy workmanship or unsafe construction of water-related structures. It could save homeowners from having to go back and make repairs to a poorly built dock, boat lift or seawall. It would also help to assure that the structures put in place stay in place. Poor workmanship can lead to safety hazards that can harm people, property and the environment if certain standards are not maintained.

Hillsborough County is unique in the fact that the Tampa Port Authority owns, for the most part, the submerged lands within the county. That is generally the lands below the waterline throughout the county, including the Hillsborough River. Because the Tampa Port Authority holds ownership of these lands it is responsible for permitting structures placed on the lands it holds title to.



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



RIVER NEWS

Editor: Alan Wright

Robert B. Hunter, FAICP - Executive Director/HCCCPC

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