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RIVER NEWS

Serving Tampa, Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County

MANATEE SUMMERTIME VISITS TO SULPHUR SPRINGS HIGHLIGHTS SITE'S IMPORTANCE



A manatee plies its way across the Sulphur Springs lagoon and heads into the Hillsborough River.

Sulphur Springs is a well-known water resource in the city of Tampa. Water from the spring supplements the river's flow. Sulphur Springs is a vital recreational asset today to the surrounding community and to those visiting the area. The new pool, playground and picnic shelters stand on the same ground where Florida's first outdoor shopping mall and the historic original spring pool/park were located. Sulphur Springs is an ecological jewel in the heart of Tampa. Large oaks canopy the river and lush vegetation provide a blanket of green along the river's shoreline. Cattails stand tall in a portion of the spring-run lagoon that spans the distance between the spring outfall and the river, a favorite hiding place for small fish and other water creatures. Here, a variety of fish species, baby alligators and turtles come to benefit from the relatively warm fresh water flowing from the spring. A variety of birdlife nests and feeds in this special area as well. Sulphur Springs is alive with wildlife.

One special species that depends on Sulphur Springs' lagoon and the Hillsborough River is the Florida Manatee. Manatees need freshwater to drink and seek warm water havens like the spring during cold periods. The Hillsborough River and the Sulphur Springs lagoon have manatees seeking freshwater, food sources and quiet places in which to birth and raise their young calves year round. While they aren't often visible in the river, when a manatee or two meander into the spring run lagoon they can clearly be seen and enjoyed. Year round visits by manatees are common place here.

Continuing to preserve the river, Sulphur Springs and the spring-run lagoon is important. It is a historical, recreational and ecological asset that all of us should frequent. Manatees use it as a respite from the rest of the world. Maybe we should learn from nature and try to stop by in places like Sulphur Springs more often and do the same.

A consolidated city-county agency serving the cities of Tampa, Plant City, Temple Terrace and unincorporated Hillsborough County

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Water Conservation Critical All Year

Now that the rainy season has arrived in the Hillsborough River area, residents can forego the urge to water their plantings and grassed areas. Over the past couple of months, nearly a dozen inches of rain have fallen in the area, helping to quench the dry hardened ground and to bring plantings back to life. Much of that rainfall has reached the area in late June/early July. Summer rainfall patterns appear to have taken hold and daily rainfall events a common occurrence. Still, some folks continue to water their lawns needlessly. A once-per-week watering restriction remains in effect in Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. With the nearly daily deluges, watering the yard should be a moot point. Allow nature to take its course in keeping the yard/plantings watered. This will save residents money



in the cost of water and in having to mow as frequently.

As indicated in the graphic below, despite the rainfall gains in the basin, flow over the dam has yet to be seen since early March of this year. This means any freshwater inflows into the river below the dam have been supplied either from Sulphur Springs or as

runoff resulting from a localized rain event. By limiting irrigation to once weekly the water levels in the river will rebound more quickly and flow can be restored to the lower river. Your help in making this happen will make a difference. Just don't turn on the spigot to the water sprinkler and know the river will benefit by your taking a nap instead of watering an already soggy lawn.

REMOTE SENSING DEVICES MONITOR RIVER CONDITIONS & SHOW RELATIONSHIPS



Remote sensing devices, like the one pictured to the left, are located in numerous locations along the Hillsborough River and other water bodies throughout Florida and the rest of the country. These and other similar devices range in sophistication in providing various levels of details about the waters they monitor. Remote

monitoring sites like this one beam data via satellite telemetry to a central collection point that then transmits the data via internet to the public. In this way government agencies and the public can keep tabs on various water conditions in their area of interest. These sites are operated by the United States Geological Survey, or USGS for short, and are extremely helpful in understanding our water resources.

Data for the Hillsborough River generally focuses on selected sites along the main branch of the river however there is some data reported in the vicinity of, or in, tributaries. These reports generally include flow data, stage levels and precipitation detected at the site. Some sites, but none focused on the Hillsborough River, provide additional data such as water temperature or conductivity levels.

This data collection system is extremely valuable for monitoring trends and following the response times in regards to precipitation and stage levels/ flow rates that result in fluctuating river conditions. It is fairly easy to see correlations between rainfall amounts in the Hillsborough River area and the rise and fall in the river's reservoir level. Following that parameter can also indicate level of use of the river as a supply source. It can also indicate operation of the gates at the dam. Looking to data from site downstream of the dam can confirm flow occurrence.

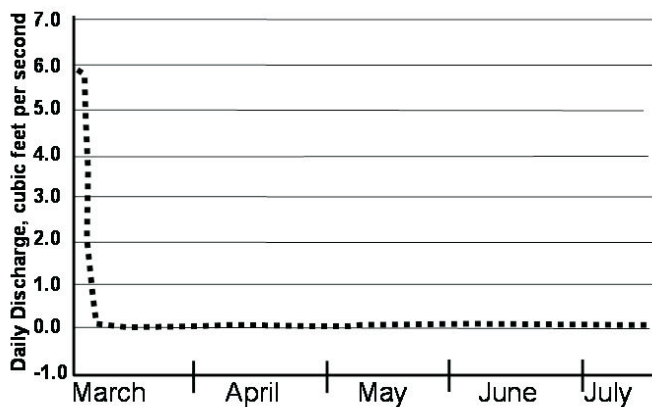
One of the neat options available to view shows water data history back in limited time frames. More current data can be viewed graphically. Data collected further back in time appears in table format. This information can reveal trends and indicates unusual events such as a hurricane moving through the area or a prolonged drought period.

The next time you log onto the internet consider taking a few minutes to view recent daily river/groundwater data and keep up to date firsthand on what is going on in the river. The technology is here to help us all stay aware and educated on the water conditions in the Hillsborough River and other area watercourses. It helps us to better grasp the connectivity between rainfall, water use and river flows and levels. So plunge on in and log onto:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/current/?type=flow&Group key=basin_cd

USGS flow data 2006

USGS 020304500 HILLSBOROUGH RIVER NEAR TAMPA FL



**CONSERVE WATER NOW
KNOW YOUR DAY
LIMIT OUTDOOR WATERING**



New Structure Acknowledges Community Landmark with Towering Appeal

Art sometimes imitates life. Being copied is the highest form of flattery. History repeats itself. All these statements hold true for a new building being completed in Sulphur Springs. The new MacDonald's restaurant, located at North Florida Avenue and Bird Street, incorporates a unique architectural design element that truly lets the patrons know this MacDonald's location, Sulphur Springs. As part of the front facade of the building's roof-line, a small tower juts upward to meet the skyline. From the right location the two towers seemingly stand side-by-side.

As this new addition to the riverfront community of Sulphur Springs bring economic activity to the neighborhood, it will be a perpetual reminder of how important the area's history has been in relation to the City of Tampa and the river. This project can also serve as a good example of what can be done with new projects to help them fit into older neighborhoods. It will certainly be an inspiration and provide food for thought about efforts to restore the historic Sulphur Springs tower, complete and build the new River Tower Park and to continue projects that benefit the community and the river.

So the next time you are making a trip down Florida Avenue in Sulphur Springs take the time to notice this new MacDonald's and maybe stop in and enjoy the view of the original tower across the street and the park that is planned to open soon.



TAC Informed on Variety of River Issues - Meetings Summary

The TAC met June 20th and July 18th at the Tampa Union Train Station. Among discussion items and reports by the TAC were:

- An update on regulatory processes related to Dissolved Oxygen Criteria (ADOC), augmentation, and minimum flow for the lower river. The TAC was advised the Southwest Florida Water Management District staff will be recommending a revised minimum flow for the lower Hillsborough River, and minimum flows for Sulphur Springs and the Tampa By-Pass Canal at the July 2006 District Governing Board meeting.
- A review and support for five Tampa Port Authority Minor Work Permit Application projects located on the Hillsborough River.
- A briefing regarding *The Heights Community Development Vision* in downtown Tampa, focusing on riverfront issues including proposed shoreline alterations, future public access, dock locations/configurations and public safety issues.
- A briefing on Tampa's Curtis Hixon Park Site Reconfiguration.
- A briefing on operation of facilities at the Hillsborough River State Park and future challenges to the park's continued use.
- A briefing on City of Temple Terrace Police Department and public partnership in establishing a residential river monitoring program.
- A status report on recent Hillsborough River levels.
- Further discussion on seeking funding for a de-pollution craft for use in the Hillsborough River and other surrounding local water bodies.
- The need to perpetuate and expand public lands acquisitions/park space for future use.
- The benefits of promoting/requiring drought-tolerant Florida-friendly landscaping as a viable water saving technique aimed at conserving shrinking potable water supplies.
- An update on River Tower Park Public Accessibility.

Future TAC meetings scheduled are on the third Tuesday of each month. All TAC meetings are scheduled to be held at the Tampa Union Train Station, 601 N. Nebraska Avenue, Tampa, second floor meeting room unless otherwise noticed. TAC 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.



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



RIVER NEWS

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Happy Trails to You.....



Parks - Trail Connector Underway Below I-275

Work on an important connection between the Sulphur Springs Pool Park and River Tower Park at Sulphur Springs has begun. This long-awaited pedestrian trail connection will consist of boardwalk and sidewalk segments that will tie together the two riverfront park sites. This trail connection will allow park users to travel under the interstate bridge at the river, making both parks accessible to each other without having to go on-road. Park shoreline improvements are being made as well. Sulphur Springs Pool Park improvements slated to be located along the river include a canoe launch. Limited docking and an observation deck are planned at River Tower Park. The connection is being made possible with funding and the cooperation of the Florida Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the City of Tampa.

Support beams are in place for a new boardwalk trail segment linking Sulphur Springs Pool Park and River Tower Park that travels under I-275