

August 9, 2004

STB Officers and friends,

We decided we needed to send you all a review of the summer events and problems.

Emails have been flying back and forth as we try to solve the severe shoaling problems in Doctors Pass. The city has paid little attention to our problems, and the Coast Guard, when contacted, decided not to require any markers for the shoals and instead listed Doctors Pass on its "Notice to Mariners" page. Just before the Fourth of July notices were put in the Naples Daily News on three separate days warning boaters of the severe shoaling in the Pass. It was a concern that the fireworks displays would draw many boaters and transiting the pass could be dangerous. There were no reports of problems that night.

We wrote to the Mayor asking the City's help in expediting the applications for the dredging permits. He said he was concerned, but sent our requests to Jon Staiger. Dr. Staiger said the permit applications were in progress, nothing more to do. He says he has warning signs on order for the pass, but nothing has happened yet.

On July 30 we received word that Coastal Planning and Engineering Co. had submitted our permit applications to the FL State DEP and US ACOE agencies. STB and the City of Naples are co-recipients of these permits. We were not sent a copy to preview, which we feel we should have received. Coastal Planning and Engineering Co. later sent Ron Pennington a CD of the entire permit application which Ron is making available to STB. When Ron read this document he found that it contained a report that sand had drifted over about 3 acres of hard bottom off shore south of the Pass after the last dredging operation. This sand was to have been deposited on special sites from which it would drift to the beaches and not affect the hard bottom. This is a serious problem as that hard bottom is protected by the FL Department of Environmental Protection because of possible coral reef development on it. So now we are concerned that there will be additional requests for information by the FL DEP further delaying our permits. It is also possible that sand can no longer be deposited offshore which eliminates the summer as a dredging time because turtle nesting precludes depositing dredged material on the beach.

Meanwhile there was a serious incident of grounding on the last weekend of July. The sailboat was hard aground in the Pass and finally was towed by an emergency tow service. We are again asking the City to try to expedite the permitting process if they are able and to get warning signs posted -- lighted ones would be our hope -- to warn boaters of the navigational hindrance. Since STB has navigational safety as a mission, this severe shoaling is a very great concern to us.

We feel we are not being kept up to date adequately by Coastal Planning and Engineering, who gave us a timeline in July and said we'd receive periodic reports. They estimate our permits will be issued around May, 2005. We feel we need more frequent reporting of progress and that the representatives of this company should attend MBSSTAB meetings, City council meetings, and STB meetings to keep us all up to date. Perhaps this concern could be voiced at the Taxing Board meeting tomorrow.

On the plus side, Al and Roz Katz met with representatives of a water filtration manufacturer in June. It was an interesting meeting, showing how filters were installed in the drains in the parking lots of the Village on Venetian Bay parking lots and how they are serviced. The filters would be too expensive for STB to install and service at this time. Al and Roz talked to a manufacturer of water circulation and aeration devices and we are hoping to install underwater devices at either extreme of our bay system to improve the dissolved oxygen in those areas. Further meetings will be planned for the fall so that the representative can assess our problem. Al and Roz also had the Conservancy test our water to get a baseline for E. Coli incidence in the non-storm season as well as performing the regular tests. We hope to test quarterly. They also have spoken with a Dr. Greg Tolley from FGCU. Dr. Tolley is going to meet with us again this fall to design a project for students from the university to aid us in our water quality mission and to receive course credit. We hope to set up a continuing endowment fund with the University if we can find a mutually beneficial project.

As always, we invite you to check our Web Site for all the latest news. Ed Ten Eyck does a marvelous job of keeping our site current. Check it out!
www.savethebays.com.

This is long, but much has happened over the summer and we felt you all should know about what we've been working on to date.

Marilyn Tempest