

# Community Partnership for Energy Planning

## Community Working Group – B (Citrus, Hernando, Levy)

### Meeting Summary

Plantation Inn – Crystal River, FL  
January 22, 2009

Time: 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Facilitated By: STAR Group, LLC  
[www.stargroupconsulting.com](http://www.stargroupconsulting.com)



## Attendees

<u>CWG Members Present:</u>	<u>Guests:</u>
Janey Baldwin – Withlacoochee River Basin Board	Gail Simpson – Progress Energy Florida
Richard Clay – Synergy Architecture	Tonya Elliott – Progress Energy Florida
Dwayne Dueker – Sugar Mill Woods Civic Association	
Curt Ebitz – Citrus 20/20, Save Our Waters Committee	Lola Stein – Progress Energy Florida
Morris Harvey – North Citrus Civic Association, Citrus County Council	John Whitney – Progress Energy Florida
Dixie Hollins – Hollinswood Ranch	
Susan Kirk – City of Crystal River	
Gary Maidhof – Citrus County	
David Miles – Hernando County	
Dorothy Pernu – 7 Rivers Regional Medical Center	
Wilbur Priest – Florida Division of Forestry	
Daryl Seaton – Best Western Crystal River	
Roy Smith – Town of Inglis	
Ed Schiller – Sugar Mill Woods Civic Association	
Kurt Woerner – City of Crystal River	

Chris Kenny of STAR Group welcomed the members and reviewed the ground rules and agenda for the meeting.

Gail Simpson provided members with an update on activities related to the Baseload Transmission Project, including:

- Florida’s Public Service Commission approved PEF’s project need filing in July 2008.
- Progress Energy Florida (PEF) filed its Site Certification Application (SCA), which included the 1-mile preferred corridor, with the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in June 2008. DEP will continue to hold hearings in 2009 regarding the SCA, including technical hearings that will take place primarily in Levy and Citrus Counties from February – April 2009. Gail informed members



that if they were interested they could provide their comments to DEP as part of the process and this could be done in person or in writing. Gail indicated that as soon as the hearing schedule was finalized she would provide it to the group.

- A decision on the SCA by the DEP is anticipated for late summer 2009.
- While the SCA is considered by DEP, PEF continues to move forward with its potential route identification analysis, including obtaining public input through the Open House process from November 2008 to January 2009. Based on finalization of the Preferred Corridor with the State, as well as analysis and input from the public, PEF hopes to finalize the potential routes by the end of 2009.
- PEF's interactive mapping tool was used to demonstrate the proposed transmission line routes from the Levy Power Plant to the Brooksville West substation for the group and to show them the proposed routes for the entire project. It was noted that this same technology is available on PEF's website. Across the entire length of the project (approximately 180 miles), PEF only needs to acquire roughly 20 miles of additional rights of way. This is in direct response to strong public sentiment that PEF attempt to stay within existing rights of way where feasible.
- There are fewer than 35 homes in the proposed routes being considered and fewer than 55 additional parcels that have homes on them (where the route crosses the parcel but where the home itself is not within the route). PEF has either made direct contact or sent overnight information to those property owners. From the Levy Plant to the Crystal River Plant area Progress will need approximately 700 feet of new rights-of-way. Approximately half of that route will be within existing Progress Energy property.
- PEF has eliminated the possible rail corridor near Dunnellon. Instead PEF will transport materials and equipment to the proposed Levy plant using barges and trucks.

The new project video was shown to the group.

After viewing the project video, Chris Kenny presented the public information survey results from the January 2008 Open House Meetings that were held in this area. 105 surveys were turned in. Nearly all of the

respondents were property owners. Two-thirds of the respondents were served by Withlacoochee Electric Cooperative. 81 percent felt the project need was well explained. 86 percent felt the Open House format was good. 72 percent favored weathered steel over galvanized. 76 percent preferred the single-pole (monopole) design. There was an even split on keeping the poles where they are today (with the potential addition of new mid-point structures) versus rebuilding the entire line (which could result in new pole placements).

Members were asked to comment on the results of the Open House meetings. Several members commented that the responses they have heard from community members has been very positive. One member brought up that the public's attention has shifted from the project itself to the rate increase. It was recommended Progress Energy work to further educate people on the rate changes and the opportunity to get free energy audits.

Lola Stein discussed PEF's Speaker's Bureau. Lola explained that the creation of the Speaker's Bureau was a direct result of the recommendations generated at the 2007 Utility Search Conferences® conducted by PEF for the Baseload Transmission Project. PEF now has 125 employees who are subject matter experts on topics such as transmission, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and that these individuals are available to speak to local organizations. Lola noted that the Speaker's Bureau already has been very active, having conducted 75 – 80 presentations between April and December 2008.

Members were asked for their input regarding topics and organizations for the Speaker's Bureau's consideration. Suggestions included presenting to Chambers of Commerce and explaining customer bills and rates, as well as the fact that PEF will conduct free energy audits for customers to identify energy saving opportunities. Lola encouraged members to contact her with specific requests and additional suggestions members might have for future Speaker's Bureau engagements. Lola may be reached at (727) 820-4720 or [lola.stein@pgnmail.com](mailto:lola.stein@pgnmail.com).

Members were introduced to John Whitney, PEF's Forester. John spoke to the members about PEF's ongoing environmental mitigation measures. John provided pictures of rights of way, maintenance activities, wildlife, and flora. He discussed ways in which transmission rights of way may be established and maintained in a manner that benefits habitats for birds, animals, insects and flora.

PEF's focus on transmission rights of way maintenance has shifted from mowing to selective applications of herbicides to eliminate non-native and high growing species.

To learn more about Florida native species, members were encouraged to visit the Florida Native Plant Society's web site at [www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org).

A question was asked about the amount of money PEF spends on environmental issues for transmission. John responded that PEF spends between \$3 million and \$4 million annually to maintain its transmission rights of way, and that, in John's view, all of PEF's transmission rights of way maintenance is focused on establishing and preserving the environment in those rights of way.

One member asked whether PEF might consider forming a volunteer group to assist with rights of way maintenance and John replied that he would be very interested in pursuing that idea. John mentioned that he would be delighted to spend time speaking with local groups. Members were asked to arrange these meetings through Gail Simpson.

Bill Moye of STAR Group asked members to discuss the group's ongoing work as well as the possibility of identifying and selecting additional members for the CWG. Members agreed to direct suggestions on these issues to Chris Kenny of STAR Group. The group also agreed to reconvene again in April 2009, following the conclusion of DEP's hearings regarding the Site Certification Application.

A member suggested that PEF develop strategies on how to communicate with government officials, residents and business owners near the new Levy plant regarding what PEF might need from the community and contribute to the community before, during and after

construction. For example: What are PEF's needs for employees during and after construction (e.g., education and training)? What can the local community expect in terms of positive economic benefits (hotels, restaurants, permanent and rental housing) as well as potential negative impacts (e.g., traffic increases, etc.) related to the plant?

A member asked about the railroad tracks that run to the existing plant and whether those tracks might be used for general public transportation, as part of a light rail system. A question was also raised about whether PEF had considered the additional uses to which the local transmission facilities might be put, such as to support a local electric trolley or bus or to support local charging stations for electric vehicles. Gail responded that PEF as well as the entire industry is looking at a whole host of potential changes driven by new technologies such as electric cars and buses that may create a significant demand on utilities. She will look into the issue of whether the existing rail lines may be used for additional purposes. One member mentioned that the issue of rail and light rail should also be directed to TBARTA.

Before adjourning, the CWG provided feedback regarding today's meeting during the Plus/Delta exercise:

Plus:

- + Good questions
- + Open discussion
- + John Whitney's presentation
- + Identified the angst over the rate increase issue
- + Gail was very thorough
- + Brought in important speakers to talk about their role
- + Good to know how far-reaching PEF's efforts are in the community

Delta:

- Δ Room too cold



**Community Working Group Roster (Citrus, Levy, Hernando Counties)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>City</b>
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	Curt	Ebitz	Citrus 20/20, Save Our Waters Committee	Homosassa
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	John	Marmish	United Way of Citrus County	Lecanto
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	Scott	Carson	City of Inverness	Inverness
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	Morris	Harvey	North Citrus Civic Association	Citrus Springs
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	Duane	Dueker	Sugar Mill Woods Civic Association	Homosassa
(B) Civic and Community Organizations and Citizens/Local Elected Officials	Citrus	Richard	Clay	Synergy Architects	Crystal River
(B) Environmental/Public Landowners	Citrus	Pat	Casselberry	Audubon Society Withlacoochee River Basin Board	Inverness
(B) Environmental/Public Landowners	Hernando	Janey	Baldwin	Florida Division of Forestry	Brooksville
(B) Environmental/Public Landowners	Citrus	Wilbur	Priest	Citrus County School District	Homosassa
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Citrus	Chuck	Dixon		Lecanto
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Hernando	Bill	Geiger	City of Brooksville	Brooksville
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Citrus	Kurt	Woerner	City of Crystal River Withlacoochee River Regional Planning Council	Crystal River
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Levy	Eugene	Trimpert		Inglis
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Citrus	Gary	Maidhof	Citrus County Southwest Florida Water Management District	Inverness
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Citrus	Jimmy	Brooks		Lecanto
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Levy	Bruce	Greenlee	Levy County Road Dept.	Bronson
(B) Government Staff/Planning Staff	Hernando	David	Miles	Hernando County Citrus Memorial Hospital Health System	Brooksville
(B) Major Power Consumers	Citrus	Katie	Lucas		Inverness
(B) Major Power Consumers	Citrus	Vernon	Lawter	Central Florida Community College 7 Rivers Regional Medical Center	Lecanto
(B) Major Power Consumers	Citrus	Dorothy	Pernu		Crystal River
(B) Private Landowners	Citrus	Dixie	Hollins	Hollinswood Ranch	Crystal River
(B) Private Landowners	Hernando	Justin	Rooks	TBF Partners, Ltd.	Brooksville
(B) Public Service/First Responders	Levy	Evan	Smith	Levy County	Bronson
(B) Public Service/First Responders	Levy	Roy	Smith	Town of Inglis	Inglis
(B) Tourism and Economic Development	Hernando	Mike	McHugh		Brooksville
(B) Tourism and Economic Development	Hernando	Nicholas	Nicholson	Nicholson Engineering Citrus County Chamber of Commerce	Brooksville
(B) Tourism and Economic Development	Citrus	Carl	Flanagan	Best Western Crystal River Resort	Hernando
(B) Tourism and Economic Development	Citrus	Daryl	Seaton		Crystal River
(B) Utility	Citrus	Carla	Groleau	Progress Energy Florida	Crystal River
(B) Utility		Larry	Watson	Progress Energy Florida	Lake Mary

