

**Jackson Blue Springs Working Group  
2007 – 2008 Accomplishments  
Chipola College**

The Jackson Blue Springs (Basin) Working Group was formally funded in August 2006 by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Springs Initiative. With the retirement of Dr. Stephen Shimmel, Allan Tidwell was tapped for the project director position for the working group. Mr. Tidwell is a science faculty member at Chipola College with more than twenty-five years teaching experience.

Four (4) quarterly meetings to be held focusing on successes, challenges, and tasks on behalf of the basin and springs, designed to help identify interested / concerned stakeholders and to help them understand why and how to protect surface, ground water, and the first magnitude springs in the basin.

1. Identify and maintain a list of spring basin stakeholders.
2. List and assemble springs basin maps and reports.
3. Identify threats to the ground water in the spring basin.
4. Plan and facilitate four (4) working group meetings of all stakeholders within the basin.
5. Organize and conduct a spring "Old Timers Day" or "Spring Appreciation Day" for the spring basin. One of these two events can substitute for one (1) working group meeting.
6. Support land acquisition efforts in the spring basin by providing guidance to the DEP acquisition staff.
7. Identify springs champions to receive Springs Task Force awards.
8. Determine research and monitoring projects underway and identify needed projects with action steps.
9. Conduct two (2) field trips of the basin and give presentations to the public and organizations in the basin.
10. Work to develop trust and rapport with community leaders, including the city manager, county manager, county commissioners, business leaders, agency heads, etc.

The following activities were accomplished on behalf of the ten (10) tasks identified above.

1.
  - a. Spring basin stakeholders were identified at each springs working group meeting.
  - b. Public Service Announcements – paid and unpaid – were published by the Jackson County Floridan and Jackson County Times.
  - c. Word of mouth also provided contact by interested persons in the community.
  - d. Local radio included the working group meetings in their weekly announcements on Wednesday mornings, specifically the Daun Moore show on WJAQ (100.9)
  - e. Participants included in the email distribution list receive information and announcements about all things related to the springs basin, state items of interest, and other related news items of note. (email distribution list in Appendix).
  - f. A website has been developed and maintained throughout the year, <http://www.chipola.edu/Grants/Blue%20Springs/index.htm>
2.
  - a. Jackson County Spring Basin maps, reports, data, photographs, and other visual materials have been collected by the College. These materials are displayed at each

- working group meeting. Some materials are used during local civic group presentations.
- b. Visual materials are on display at every working group meeting.
  - c. A permanent display of donated books and materials relating to the Jackson Blue Springs Basin, spring shed, and surrounding areas and rivers was installed in the Chipola College Library. Materials have continued to be donated and an additional bookcase was purchased this past year.
  - d. Some materials have been framed or are on bulletin board display; all items are currently located in the Math and Science building (D) on Chipola' campus.
  - e. Some of the materials have been copied and transferred to the above mentioned webpage for viewing.
3. Threats to the Basin have been identified and include the following:
    - a. A reduction in water quantity
    - b. A reduction in water quality
  4. Working group meetings have continued to be held regularly.
  5. Old Timers Day was held on May 3, 2008. Project Director Allan Tidwell has requested research and costs to take previous years' interview notes, and past three years video interviews, and transcribe them to a small text for local publication. Fiscal feasibility will determine if this can be accomplished during the 2008-09 year.
  6. Allan Tidwell has worked with DEP personnel to develop a volunteer "amnesty day" for basin landowners. This will be a day to identify, prioritize, and strategize clean up of land within the basin that directly impacts the quality of the springs basin and karst features.

The DEP intends for the new Ambassador position to provide outreach and information about the project to landowner's.
  7. The springs champion for 2007-2008 has not been announced at this time.
  8. Scientists and government representatives have provided presentations on their research and data. Many of the presentations were accompanied with a PowerPoint presentation and can be found on the college website <http://www.chipola.edu/Grants/Blue%20Springs/events.htm>.
  9. Field trips were held to a landowner property as a potential amnesty site; and students were taken to the Caverns State Park, and the Apalachicola River Bluffs. Approximately 20 adults and more than 100 college age students participated in these field trips.
  11. Meeting agendas, continuing education participant forms and other media identify the number of people participating in the working group meetings, and their professional status. One county commissioner, the city planner and the previous county manager all attended at least one meeting during this past year.

### **Waste Management**

Local business Waste Management / Spring Hill continues to capture and convert to energy of its methane from the facility. The College Science department hosted a field trip to the landfill to learn more about management and this new energy project; participants were students enrolled in the Chipola College BS Science Education program.

### **Jackson County Recycling Center**

The recycling center has introduced recycling trailers on the campus of Chipola College and various other locations throughout the county. A strong campaign promoting recycling has been implemented by the county and there is heavy promotion on campus as well; the physical plant has placed specialty receptacles around campus for sorting trash and disposing of the materials in the recycling trailers.

### **Regulations**

There has been no change to residential or commercial regulations for the county. It is anticipated that the volunteer amnesty project may be the best solution to proactive participation in environmental conservation practices moving forward.

### **Planning**

The Science Department Dean has met with project staff to develop activities and timelines for the 2008-2009 working group.