Alafia River South Prong West Branch

Methods

Study Area Analysis

The watershed containing the stream being assessed was analyzed using ESRI ArcGIS 10.2. Using this software with 2016 Hillsborough County aerial, 2011 Land Use/ Land Cover (LULC) and Watershed boundary (WBID) layers courtesy of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The Landscape Development Intensity Index (LDI) was calculated for the WBID containing the stream. From FDEP "The Landscape Development Intensity index (LDI) is an estimate of how much humans have altered an area of interest around a waterbody. Various land use types (low density residential, row crops, industrial and natural) are assigned coefficients of land use intensity based on estimates of the amount of human energy that is put into those land use types. The LDI is calculated by multiplying each land use coefficient by the percentage of the area of interest occupied by that land use, and then summing the results. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) uses the LDI as a tool to estimate potential land use impacts on streams, lakes, and wetlands. LDI values less than two (≤ 2) can be considered minimally disturbed." In the Florida framework, the maximum LDI index score is approximately 42.

Habitat/Vegetation Assessment

For small streams that are not easily navigated by Jonboat for bathymetric mapping and vegetation analysis, Hillsborough County requested the implementation of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection methods for Stream and River Habitat Assessment (FT 3100) (http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/sas/sop/sops.htm) using forms FD 9000-3, FD 9000-4 and FD 9000-5, Rapid Periphyton Survey (FS 7230) using form FD 9000-25 and Linear Stream Vegetation Survey (FS 7320) using form FD 9000-32. These methods were utilized on two sampling locations on each stream, typically near access points along roadways.

Stream and River Habitat Assessment per FT3100 receives a score calculated in Form FD 9000-5. This score results from the ranking of the primary habitat components (substrate diversity, substrate availability, water velocity and habitat smothering) and secondary habitat components (Artificial channelization, bank stability, riparian buffer zone width and riparian zone vegetation quality). The maximum score possible in this method is a 160.

Two metrics are utilized in the Linear Vegetation Survey. The Mean Coefficient of Conservatism (CoC) applies a score of 0-10 to each species based on its ecological tolerances and fidelity to presettlement conditions. Species with higher scores show a high fidelity to native, undisturbed habitats and are typically sensitive to alterations. Available CoC scores can be obtained from LT 7000 from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection at:

http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/sas/sop/sops.htm. The Percent Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (% FLEPPC) metric calculates the percent invasive exotics as the number of occurrences of FLEPPC Category

I or II in the 100 m reach divided by the total number of taxa occurrences in the 100 m reach. The FLEPPC list can be found at: http://www.fleppc.org/list/11list.html

Stream Condition Index Assessment

The Stream Condition Index (SCI) was sampled per DEP SOP FS7420 and calculated per DEP SOP LT7200. The SCI consists of collecting macroinvertebrates via 20 D-frame dipnet sweeps (0.5 m in length) in the most productive habitats in a 100 m reach of stream. The organisms are sub-sampled, and identified to the lowest practical taxonomic level. The SCI is composed of ten metrics, eight of which decrease in response to human disturbance, with two metrics (% very tolerant and % dominant) increasing in response to human disturbance. According to DEP SOP LT 7000, the SCI score ranges and categories are: (68-100) Exceptional; (35-67) Healthy; and (0-34) Impaired. Proposed biological health assessment criteria state that a site is considered to meet designated uses if the average of the two most recent SCI scores is 40 or higher and neither of those scores is less than 35.

Water Quality Assessment

Physical water quality samples were taken using a Eureka Manta Sub-2 multiprobe pre and post calibrated daily. Measurements taken with this device include: depth, conductivity, pH, Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l and % Saturation) and salinity. Chemical water parameters were collected and preserved on ice by USF Water Institute staff and analyzed at the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County Laboratory. Analysis include; Chlorophyll (a, b, c, t and corrected), Alkalinity, Color, Fecal Coliform, Enterococci, Ammonia, Nitrates/Nitrites, Total Phosphorous, Kjeldahl Nitrogen and Total Nitrogen.

Study Area

Alafia River South Prong West Branch is located north of Lithia Pinecrest Road near Keysville road in Hillsborough County Florida was sampled on 4/27/17. The sampling site is located off of Lithia Pinecrest Road and lies within the FDEP WBID 1652, which contains 2,273 acres of land. The watershed surrounding West Branch is dominated by Residential (26.65%), Agriculture/Pasture (6.03%), Forest/Natural (23.19%) land uses. The Landscape Development Intensity Index of the watershed is 4.88. The LDI was also calculated for the 100 meter buffer around the stream in the WBID to capture the land use that has the largest potential to alter the stream. The buffer LDI value was 2.85 and was dominated by Residential (24.13%), Agriculture/Pasture (5.3%), Forest/Natural (65.99%) land uses.



Figure 1. 2017 Alafia River South Prong West Branch Assessment Study Area Map

Habitat Assessment



Figure 2 Overview photograph of Alafia River South Prong West Branch sample site

West Branch at Lithia Pinecrest Road received a suboptimal Habitat Assessment score of 96. Primary habitat components received suboptimal scores for Water Velocity and Habitat Smothering, and a marginal score Substrate Diversity. Substrate Availability (2.6% Snags, 2.6% Roots/undercut banks) scored in the poor category. Secondary habitat components received optimal scores for Bank Stability and Riparian Buffer Zone Width (left Bank) while suboptimal scores were recorded for Artificial Channelization and Riparian Zone Vegetation Quality (Left Bank). Marginal scores were observed for Riparian Buffer Zone Width (right Bank)

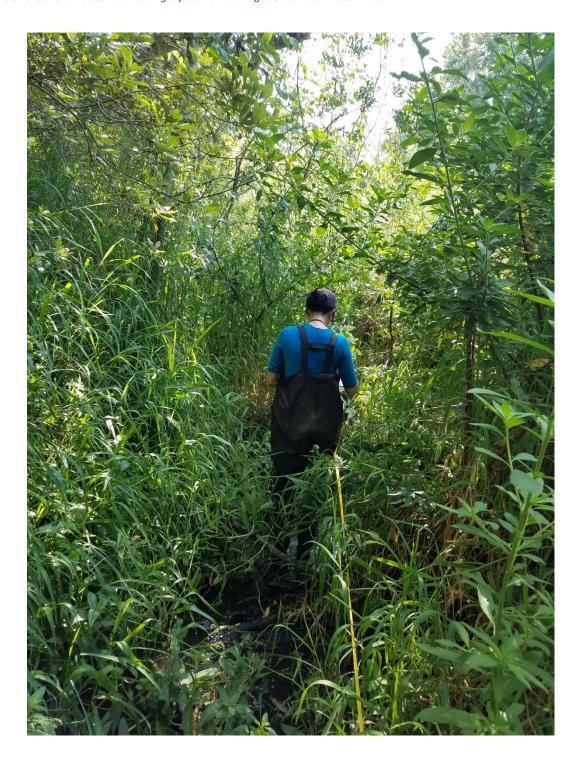
During the Rapid Periphyton Survey, periphyton was not observed in the 99 individual grab samples performed. The average canopy cover in the 100 meter region was 96.54%. The Secchi Disk Depth was measured as 0.4 meters visible on bottom at the 10 meter mark. The average water depth at the time of the assessment was 0.15 meters.

The Linear Vegetation Survey identified 9 species rooted in the water at the time of the assessment. Two of these species are non-native, invasive species (*Ludwigia peruviana* and *Urochola mutica*). *Urochola mutica* was identified as being a dominant species between the 30 and 50 meter marks. The vegetation community along this sample location showed some evidence of frequent disturbance resulting in the dominance by pioneering species. There were a total of 34 species observations in the 100 meter study area. The mean Coefficient of Conservatism (CoC) metric for the study area was 1.99 and the % FLEPPC metric for the study area was 26.5%.

Table 1 Linear Vegetation Survey Results

Taxa Name	C of C Score	0-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	09-05	02-09	08-02	06-08	90-100	Total Occurrences
Cephalanthus occidentalis	5							1	1			2
Cicuta maculata	4.54	1					1					2
Commelina diffusa	2.02	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Cornus foemina	5.91						1					1
Hydrocotyle umbellata	1.92	1		1		1			1	1	1	6
Ludwigia peruviana	0	1			1	1		1	1			5
Ludwigia repens	3.2							1	1	1		3
Sambucus nigra	1.48		1									1
Urochloa mutica	0			1	D	D		1				4
		4	2	3	3	4	3	5	5	3	2	34
Mean Coefficient of Conservatism	1.99											
Percent FLEPPC	26.5											

Figure 3. *Urochola mutica* and *Ludwigia peruviana* along the banks of West Branch



Stream Condition Index

The analysis of the SCI sample involves splitting the sample into 2 aliquots for analysis. The SCI metrics are then calculated on each separately. The final SCI score is an average of the two scores. The SCI score for West Branch was 56 out of a possible 100 points, corresponding with a "Healthy" designation, with the expected community of a healthy stream.

The summary of the metric scores for aliquot A (top) and aliquot B (bottom) are shown in Table 2. Both samples were dominated by *Cheumatopsyche spp*. Sample A contained 28 total taxa, including 1 sensitive taxa and 20.69% very tolerant individuals. Sample B contained 27 total taxa, including 3 sensitive taxa and 32.47% very tolerant individuals. Both samples contained a long-lived taxa *Corbicula spp*.

Table 2 SCI metric summaries for West Branch

	Raw Totals	SCI scores	Adjusted SCI scores
Total Taxa	28.00	5.42	5.42
Total Ephemeroptera	1.00	2.00	2.00
Total Trichoptera	3.00	4.29	4.29
% Filter Feeders	26.90	6.09	6.09
Total Clingers	4.00	5.71	5.71
Total Long-lived Taxa	1.00	3.33	3.33
% Dominance	21.38	8.52	8.52
% Tanytarsini	6.90	6.08	6.08
Total Sensitive Taxa	1.00	1.43	1.43
% Very Tolerant Individuals	20.69	4.06	4.06

SCI Sum	46.93
Final SCI score	52.15

			Adjusted SCI
	Raw Totals	SCI scores	scores
Total Taxa	27.00	5.00	5.00
Total Ephemeroptera	1.00	2.00	2.00
Total Trichoptera	5.00	7.14	7.14
% Filter Feeders	35.06	7.99	7.99
Total Clingers	5.00	7.14	7.14
Total Long-lived Taxa	1.00	3.33	3.33
% Dominance	26.62	7.48	7.48
% Tanytarsini	9.09	6.80	6.80
Total Sensitive Taxa	3.00	4.29	4.29
% Very Tolerant Individuals	32.47	2.97	2.97

SCI Sum	54.14
Final SCI score	60.16

The full results of the SCI sampling are shown in Table 3 (Sample A) and Table 4 (Sample B) for West Branch.

West Branch SCIA
Stream Condition Index (SCI)
Samples Collected 04/27/2017
Project #, 6063/170278

Stream Condition Index Results for West Branch SCIA

			-														
						Collapsed		Ephemeroptera Trichoptera	Trichoptera								Very Tolerant
Phylum	Class	Order	Family	Taxa	Abundance	Abundance	Taxa Presence Taxa	Taxa	Taxa	50% Filterer	100% Filterer	Clinger Taxa	Long-lived Taxa Dominant Taxa Tanytarsini	Dominant Taxa		Sensitive Taxa Individuals	Individuals
Nemertea	Enopla	Hoplonemertea	Tetrastemmatidae Prostoma spp.	Prostoma spp.	1	1	1										1
Annelida	Clitellata	Lumbriculida	Lumbriculidae	Eclipidrilus spp.	1	1											
Annelida	Clitellata	Opisthopora	Sparganophilidae	Sparganophilidae Sparganophilus spp.	1	1	1										
Annelida	Clitellata	Rhynchobdellida Glossiphoniidae	Glossiphoniidae	Helobdella papillata	3	3	1										ಬ
Mollusca	Gastropoda Hygrophila		Ancylidae	Ancylidae spp.	1	1	1										
Mollusca	Gastropoda		Physidae	Physella cubensis	24	24											24
Mollusca	Bivalvia	Veneroida	Corbiculidae	Corbicula spp.	2	2	1				2		1				
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Ephemeroptera Baetidae		Baetidae spp.	4	4	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Odonata	Coenagrionidae	Argia spp.	8	8	1										
Arthropoda Insecta		Odonata	Calopterygidae	Hetaerina spp.	1	1	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	-		Aeshnidae	Gomphaeschna spp.	1	1	1										
Arthropoda Insecta		Trichoptera	Leptoceridae	Nectopsyche spp.	2	2	1		1								
Arthropoda Insecta			Hydropsychidae	Cheumatopsyche spp.	31	31	1		1		31	1		31			
Arthropoda Insecta		Trichoptera	Hydroptilidae	Neotrichia spp.	_	1	1		1			1					
Arthropoda Insecta	l	l	Elmidae	Stenelmis spp.	_	1	1					1					
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Coleoptera	Elmidae	Microcylloepus spp.	22	22	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Coleoptera	Gyrinidae	Dineutus spp.	2	2	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Tanytarsus buckleyi	8	8	1			4					8		
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Cryptochironomus spp.	2	2	1										2
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Polypedilum flavum	12	12	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Rheotanytarsus exiguus group	2	2	1				2	1			2		
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Ablabesmyia rhamphe group	1	1	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Pentaneura inconspicua	4	4	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Corynoneura spp.	1	1	1										
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Chironomidae	Rheocricotopus spp.	2	2	1									1	
Arthropoda Insecta	Insecta	Diptera	Tipulidae	Tipulidae spp.	2	2	1										
Arthropoda Insecta		Heteroptera	Veliidae	Rhagovelia spp.	4	4	1										
Arthropoda	Arthropoda Arachnida	Trombidiformes Sperchonidae	1	Sperchon spp.	L		_										

West Branch SCIB
Stream Condition Index (SCI)
Samples Collected 04/27/2017
Project #, 6063170278

#: 6063170278

Megill Collainoil	IIII ey Keaulta ivi	Stream Condition index Results for West Dianch Scip	-												
Phylum Class	Order	Family	Taxa	Abundance	Collapsed Abundance	Ephemeropte Taxa Presence Taxa	Ephemeroptera Trichoptera Taxa Taxa	50% Filterer	100% Filterer	Clinger Taxa	Long-lived Taxa	Long-lived Taxa Dominant Taxa Tanytarsini		V Sensitive Taxa Ir	Very Tolerant Individuals
			e Prostoma spp.	\sim	2	_			- 1						
- 1	20	_	Eclipidrilus spp.	2	2										
Vollusca Gastro	Sastropoda Hygrophila	Ancylidae	Ancylidae spp.	6											
Mollusca Gastro	Sastropoda Hygrophila	Ancylidae	Hebetancylus excentricus	_	7										
Mollusca Gastro	Sastropoda Hygrophila	Physidae	Physidae spp.	27											
Mollusca Gastro	Sastropoda Hygrophila	Physidae	Physella cubensis	12	39										
Mollusca Gastro	Sastropoda Hygrophila	Planorbidae	Planorbidae spp.	_	_	_									
Mollusca Bivalvia	<u>ක</u> .		Bivalvia spp.	_											
Mollusca Bivalvia	ia Veneroida	Corbiculidae	Corbicula spp.	_	2				2		_				
Arthropoda Insecta		Ephemeroptera Baetidae	Baetidae spp.	_	_		_								
Arthropoda Insecta	a Odonata	Coenagrionidae	Coenagrionidae spp.	4	. 4	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Trichoptera		Oecetis avara	1	1	1		1							
Arthropoda Insecta	a Trichoptera	Hydropsychidae	Cheumatopsyche spp.	41	41	1		_	41	1		41			
Arthropoda Insecta	a Trichoptera		Hydropsyche rossi	,	1	1		1		1				1	
Arthropoda Insecta	a Trichoptera	Hydroptilidae	Hydroptilidae spp.	1				_							
Arthropoda Insecta		Hydroptilidae	Hydroptila spp.		4			_		_					
Arthropoda Insecta		Elmidae	Elmidae spp.	u											
Arthropoda Insecta			Microcylloepus spp.	6	9	1									
Arthropoda Insecta		Gyrinidae	Dineutus spp.	1	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera		Diptera spp.	2											
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Tanytarsus spp.	4											
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Tanytarsus buckleyi	5	10				0.				10		
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Cryptochironomus spp.	1	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Polypedilum flavum	11	12	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Rheotanytarsus exiguus group	4	4	1			4	1			4		
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Pentaneura inconspicua	_	_										
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Thienemanniella spp.	1	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Chironomidae	Cricotopus or Orthocladius	1	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Ceratopogonidae	Ceratopogonidae spp.	2	2	1									
Arthropoda Insecta		Simuliidae	Simulium spp.	2	2	1			2	1				1	
Arthropoda Insecta	a Diptera	Empididae	Hemerodromia spp.	1	1	1								_	
Arthropoda Insecta	a Heteroptera	Veliidae	Rhagovelia spp.	_	1	1									
Arthropoda Insecta	a Lepidoptera	Crambidae	Acentropinae spp.	_	_										
Arthropoda Arachnida	_	Trombidiforman Hygrobatidae	Hyamhates SDD.	,	٠	1					•				

Water Quality Assessment

Limited long-term water quality data is available for West Branch. The data that is available was collected by the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission. Values for the physical water parameters begin in 2005 and continue through present. Values for the laboratory water parameters begin in 2005 but end in 2013, aside from the sample taken along with this assessment. The 2017 USF Water Institute Assessment fall within the range of the previous data collections. Table 5 provides a summary of the Physical/Chemical conditions recorded at the site.

Table 5 West Branch Physical Water Quality (Field)

				West Br	anch			
Date	Depth (m)	Temp (°C)	рН	DO (mg/L)	DO (% Sat)	Cond (UMHO/cm	Salinity (PPT)	Secchi Depth (m)
4/27/17	0.12	23.61	7.92	7.51	87.7	278	0.13	0.4
Mean								
POR		25.43	7.28	7.56	86.39	275.8	0.13	

The chemical water quality analysis for West Branch is shown in Table 6 along with mean values for the period of record for available parameters. Period of record mean and the sample for this assessment for Total Phosphorous values were below the nutrient region threshold developed by FDEP of 0.49 mg/L with a mean value of 0.465 mg/L (2005-2012). Total Phosphorous values for the sample from this assessment were 0.371 mg/L. Total Nitrogen values for the period of record were above the nutrient region threshold developed by FDEP of 1.65 mg/L with a mean value of 2.940 mg/L. The Total Nitrogen value from the assessment was well below the threshold with a concentration of 0.371 mg/L. Chlorophyll-a values fall within the acceptable value range with a period of record mean value of 1.67 ug/L.

Table 6 West Branch Water Quality (Laboratory)

Parameter	Howell Branch	POR Mean	Units
Alkalinity	65.0		mg/LCaCO3
Nitrates/Nitrites	0.004		mg/L
Fecal Coliform	233	773	#/100 ml
Enterococci	1,260	1,493	#/100 ml
Chlorophyll a	1.2	2.19	ug/L
Chlorophyll b	2.6	0.47	ug/L
Chlorophyll c	0.5	0.17	ug/L
Chlorophyll t	1.7		ug/L
Chlorophylla Corr	3.4	1.67	ug/L
Chlorophyll-pheo	6.6		ug/L
Ammonia	0.006	0.059	mg/L
Kjeldahl Nitrogen	0.133	0.721	mg/L
Total Nitrogen	0.137	2.940	mg/L
Total Phosphorus	0.371	0.465	mg/L
Color(345)F.45	14.9	30.22	Pt/Co

Conclusion

Alafia River south Prong West Branch at Lithia Pinecrest Road is located with some buffer of natural, undeveloped land surrounding it. The stream itself showed moderate alterations to the stream flow, buffer and banks in the region assessed. At the time of the habitat assessment, the water levels were low, corresponding to the end of the dry season, however sufficient habitat for macroinvertebrates was observed. Due to these factors, the Habit Assessment resulted in a Suboptimal score of 96. Some disruption to the vegetation community was observed in the results of the Linear Vegetation Survey with West Branch not meeting either metric for Average Coefficient of Conservatism or the Percent FLEPPC. The historical water quality record for West Branch showed elevated concentrations of Total Nitrogen and Bacteria. The results of the SCI sampling indicate that the stream is

not impaired based on the macroinvertebrate community. Table 7 Summarizes the results of the nutrient sampling, floristic sampling, habitat assessment and SCI.

Table 7 Summary of Water Quality, Floristic Surveys and Habitat Assessments

D.4		Lithia	Ma ara DOD	Thus ab all d
IVI	easure	Pinecrest Road	Mean POR	Threshold
Total Phos	phorous (mg/l)	0.371	0.465	< 0.49
Total Ni	trogen (mg/l)	0.137	2.94	< 1.65
RPS (9	% Rank 4-6)	0		< 25%
LVS	Avg C of C	1.99		≥ 2.5
_	FLEPPC %	26.50%		< 25%
Chlorophyll (µg/l)		3.4	1.67	< 20 μg/l
Habitat	Assessment	96		> 34
	SCI	56		> 34