

May 2019

FL LEGISLATORS PASS NEW BUDGET

The Florida Legislature passed a budget with funding for environmental projects including:

- \$322M for Everglades restoration and early planning, design and construction of the Everglades Ag Area Reservoir
- \$40M to complete the raising of Tamiami Trail
- \$100M for springs restoration
- \$50M for beach restoration
- \$10M for a red tide/blue green algae task force
- \$25M for a septic-to-sewer cost-share program

SFWMD HIRES NEW EXECUTIVE

The South Florida Water Management District board has hired Drew Bartlett as the new Executive Director.

Bartlett was a deputy secretary at the state Department of Environmental Protection. In this position, he worked with the state's five water management districts and oversaw several divisions of the DEP responsible for environmental restoration, water quality and coastal management.

Bartlett will work closely with the Army Corps of Engineers to expedite construction on a 23-foot-deep, 10,100-acre reservoir to store up to 78.2 billion gallons of excess lake water, and a 6,500-acre man-made marsh to clean the water before it's sent south to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

Naples Area Board of REALTORS®

Water Quality Advisory



As the voice of REALTORS® in the Naples area, NABOR® has and will always advocate for action to reduce or eliminate any manmade or environmental threats to homeownership, property values and the living standards in Florida.

REDUCING POLLUTION AT THE SOURCE

At the April 23 Board of Collier County Commissioners meeting Danette Kinaszczuk, Pollution Control Manager, proposed a public hearing to consider the adoption of a new Pollution Control & Prevention Ordinance to replace a 30-year-old ordinance that does not address current water quality issues and standards.

Water quality samples collected and analyzed by Pollution Control over the past five years show 33 percent of Collier County's waterbodies are impaired. This is caused by multiple sources of pollution and an ineffective ordinance that prevents the agency from stopping discharges of polluted water into Collier County's stormwater system thus creating excessive pollution levels. The state sets water quality standards and assigned total maximum daily loads due to pollutant levels exceeding those standards. Pollution Control's job is to adhere to these standards, but without enforcement authority, it can only use education to try and make the polluters stop.

Another state regulation the county faces is implementation of Basin Management Action Plans. Lee County spent \$27 million to construct and implement its plans. Kinaszczuk estimates that Collier County's plan for just two of its watersheds would be in excess of \$85 million.

The new proposed ordinance would add language necessary to comply with the county's state permit that prohibits illicit discharges. It would also require best management practices, add enforcement authority, allow for source tracking, and focus on pollution prevention.

The main goal of the new proposed Pollution Control & Prevention Ordinance is to stop the problem at its source. For example, parts of

Reducing Pollution at the Source...

Haldeman Creek watersheds are impaired for copper. If, through source tracking, it is determined that one neighborhood is contributing to the high copper levels then through the ordinance, that neighborhood would be required to implement best management practices such as stopping the use of copper-based algaecide in ponds. If they refuse to reduce excessive algaecide use, then another method would prevent them from discharging polluted water into the county's stormwater system.

The new ordinance would also remove fees and lessen the redundancy of sludge transportation licensing. The county's planning commission, other departments and civic groups approved the proposed ordinance.

The commission voted to continue discussions and asked Kinaszczuk to obtain additional feedback from sludge contractors and report her findings at the next meeting. The commission also agreed to delay a vote to approve a public hearing on the matter until the next meeting.

The NABOR® Water Quality Task Force recommends REALTORS® continue to educate new homeowners on best practices for water quality to include providing them with resources on fertilizer use and septic system inspections. NABOR®'s Allied & Affiliate member directory is also a good resource to share with homeowners. Download the app for smartphones or page through a digital copy of the directory at www.nabor.com/allied-and-affiliate-member-directory.

FGCU PROFESSOR JOINS NEW BLUE-GREEN ALGAE TASK FORCE

Florida Gulf Coast University marine science professor **Mike Parsons** was recently named to the five-member Blue-Green Algae Task Force created by Governor DeSantis. The Task Force's objective is to expedite progress toward reducing the adverse impacts of blue-green algae blooms now and over the next five years.

DeSantis said the five researchers on the Task Force will "make recommendations to reduce nutrients in Lake Okeechobee and downstream estuaries as well as look at connections to the red tide algal blooms that have affected Florida's coasts."

Parsons said the Task Force's first order of business is to ensure Florida is ready if an algae outbreak happens in 2019. In addition to Parsons, the Task Force includes Wendy Graham from the University of Florida, Evelyn Gaiser from Florida International University, James Sullivan from Florida Atlantic University, and Valerie Paul from the Smithsonian Marine Station at Fort Pierce. They will report to the state's Department of Environmental Protection secretary.

A bill that provides \$3 million a year for the next six years for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Mote Marine Laboratory to research red tide passed during the 2019 Legislative sessions.



FLORIDA GETS FIRST CHIEF SCIENCE OFFICER

In early April, Governor Ron DeSantis appointed biologist Thomas Frazer as the state's first Chief Science Officer.

Frazer is the director of the University of Florida's School of Natural Resources and Environment, and previously worked as acting director of the UF Water Institute. In the new role, Frazer will direct all scientific work and research directed at understanding and finding solutions to water quality and environmental issues affecting Florida.

He also holds a Ph.D. in biological science from the Univ. of California, and is on the faculty advisory committee with the UF Climate Institute and served as chairman of the Climate Science Faculty Committee. Climate change will be a part of his office's mission.

RESOURCES

[Collier County Watershed Management Plan](#)

[Florida DEP](#)

[Collier County WaterKeeper](#)

[Captains for Clean Water](#)

[Daily Red Tide Reports](#)