



April 29, 2024

South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Dear Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Coastal Conservation Association of Florida. As an organization, we serve to advise and educate the public on the conservation of marine resources. CCA strives to conserve, promote, and enhance the present and future availability of coastal resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public.

In Florida, these coastal resources are vital. They contribute to the health of our environment, the habitat for our wildlife, the overall economy and our quality of life. The challenges facing Lake Okeechobee and the connected waterways that depend on the lake pose a serious risk to our state.

The Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Area (LKBSTA) will restore the health of the Kissimmee River and Lake O, providing immense benefits the environment, surrounding communities and our precious coastal areas. The Coastal Conservation Association of Florida urges you to support the LKBSTA project at each stop ahead.

As we know, our marine resources require plentiful, clean water to thrive. Currently, water with toxic levels of phosphorous enters the lake from the Kissimmee River and other canals North of the lake. As these levels rise, phosphorous accumulates in Lake Okeechobee turning into algal blooms. These algal blooms are toxic to much of the marine life that occupies the land.

A recent report from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in their Basin Management Action Plan demonstrates how LKBSTA can turn the tide. This project is an essential component to the plan to restore Lake Okeechobee. By promptly implementing this technology, we can make a lasting change in the long-term trajectory of these waterways. Cleaner water directly correlates to a more bountiful population of marine life.

The Coastal Conservation Association of Florida recommends the SWFMD advance the LKBSTA project with urgency. We have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of the people and marine life throughout South Florida. I thank you for your consideration of this initiative through each critical phase.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Green".

Scott Green
Government Relations Chairman
Coastal Conservation Association of Florida

CC: Drew Bartlett, Executive Director, SFWMD