

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Resolution No. 2016 - 0712

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District advising the Florida Legislature to adopt Governor Scott's proposed Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Cleanup Initiative. This voluntary 50/50 matching grant program would encourage residents in communities surrounded by bodies of water affected by algae blooms to replace septic tanks with sewer systems in order to curb pollution that is currently fueling the algae blooms.

WHEREAS, while the most high-profile contributor to current algae blooms impacting the Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee estuaries is releases from Lake Okeechobee made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, scientific research shows local contributors such as failing septic tanks are providing excess nutrients for the algae to feed;

WHEREAS, the work of research professor Dr. Brian Lapointe and his team at the Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute indicates that wastewater - specifically septic tanks - is the major source of excess nitrogen in the Indian River Lagoon and has likely been underestimated by past nutrient loading models;

WHEREAS, the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board acknowledges simply stopping lake releases or storing water is not enough to solve our water quality problems and that algae blooms occurred in years when there were no lake releases;

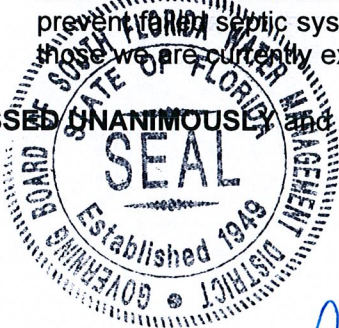
WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Health, which permits new septic tanks and the repair of existing systems, estimates that as of 2015 there were more than 150,000 septic systems in Martin, St. Lucie and Palm Beach counties alone;


WHEREAS, between 2011 and 2015, local basin runoff - including water from septic systems - accounted for an average of 79% of the total inflows to the St. Lucie Estuary, 79% of the total nitrogen load and 87% of the total phosphorus load,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT THAT:

The Florida Legislature adopt Governor Scott's Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Cleanup Initiative as part of the 2017 State budget and make relevant amendments to law as an investment in the communities along the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries to prevent ~~from~~ septic systems from leaking nutrients that fuel harmful algae blooms such as those we are currently experiencing in our local waterways.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AND ADOPTED on this 14th day of July, 2016.



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT, BY ITS GOVERNING BOARD
By: 

Chairman

Attest: 

District Clerk/Secretary