

# Martin County Projects Update



## Rivers Coalition Meeting

**October 29, 2015 at 11 a.m., City of Stuart Commission Chambers**  
(Update provided by Deborah Drum, Ecosystem Restoration & Management Division)

- Lake Okeechobee Levels
  - Today = 14.60 feet
  - 30 days ago = 14.67 feet
  - 1 year ago = 15.92 feet
  - 2 years ago = 15.29 feet
- Current inflows to Lake O = 2785 cfs
- Current outflows from Lake O = 2055 cfs
- Salinity conditions in the estuary are in a fairly good range.
- Of note, there have been no releases from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie in this wet season. All flows to the estuary have been large amounts from local watershed runoff.
- Last week, Martin County organized the 16 County Fly In in Washington DC, the federal advocacy component of the annual 16 County Ecosystem Summit in Okeechobee, comprised of counties throughout the South Florida Water Management District (Martin, St. Lucie, Lee, Charlotte, Osceola, Polk, Okeechobee, Highlands, Glades, Orange, Hendry, Palm Beach, Broward, Collier, Miami-Dade, and Monroe). The Coalition of counties from throughout South Florida advocated for the following federal priorities:
  - Funding for Herbert Hoover Dike, Kissimmee River Restoration, Indian River Lagoon-South (C-44, C-23 and C25), the C-43 project and a Water Resources Development Act every two years to authorize key projects.
  - The Coalition met with representatives from Governor Rick Scott's Washington office, and were the guests and focus of the Everglades Caucus meeting, House and Senate appropriators, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Pentagon, White House Intergovernmental Affairs, Senator Nelson and staff to Senator Rubio. Martin County also met with the Department of Interior, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Congressman Patrick Murphy and other staff to discuss our federal priorities.
- The Board's top priority remains funding for Indian River Lagoon-South and specifically the C-44 project at both the federal and state level. Martin County is most grateful for the recent awarding by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers of a \$197 million contract for the C-44 reservoir and is looking forward to that component breaking ground soon. We will continue to advocate for federal funds for the contract's completion and for funding from the Legislature needed to complete the C-44 storm water treatment areas. The Board also supports prioritization of the remaining components of the IRL-S in the Integrated Delivery Schedule, the blueprint for everglades restoration.
- The implementation of Amendment 1 is also of critical importance to Martin County. The Board supports Governor Scott's 2015 proposal for \$5 billion in funding and a dedicated funding source for Everglades restoration. Martin County further supports increasing funding for land acquisition and restoration to provide additional storage north and south of Lake Okeechobee.
- Additional key appropriations requests this session include: Support for water projects including Septic to Sewer Conversion projects in Old Palm City and Golden Gate, funding for the All American Ditch Stormwater Quality Retrofit Project as well as support for the St. Lucie River Issues Team and

Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative. The County will also be weighing in on statewide water policy, currently under consideration.

- At the State level, the Coalition will be advocating: Funding for Governor Scott's dedicated funding source/20 year Everglades restoration plan; Kissimmee River Restoration; Indian River Lagoon-South (C-44, C-23 and C25); C-43; support for the Senate Select committee, protection of local wetland protection ordinances, oppose any preemption to regulations, particularly in water control districts created and operating pursuant to chapter 298, Florida State Statutes.
- Of note, septic issues have been a particular topic of interest to the Rivers Coalition. The Martin County Board of County Commissioners will be having a workshop to receive updates to the septic-related studies that have been done over the past almost two years on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. in the BOCC chambers.