

Martin County Projects Update



Rivers Coalition Meeting

April 27, 2017 at 11 a.m., City of Stuart Commission Chambers

(Update provided by Deborah Drum, Manager, Ecosystem Restoration & Management Division)

LAKE OKEECHOBEE CONDITIONS

- Lake Okeechobee level is currently at 11.75 feet. 1 year ago the Lake was at 14.38 feet (2.63 feet higher). The Lake has dropped .90 feet in the past month due to exceptionally dry conditions (12.65 feet one month ago). Dry conditions continue to be predicted. We have had below average rainfall throughout the SFWMD region since September 2016.
- Temperatures at the Roosevelt Bridge are ranging in the past week from 76-79 degrees Fahrenheit, which has showed a warming trend consistent with this time of year.
- Salinities are pretty consistent, ranging from 27 to 30 ppt. Conditions generally look good. We did see salinities reduce slightly as a result of rainfall on Sunday, April 23.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- We are eagerly awaiting outcome of the legislative session. Some of the funding requests for water projects are not faring well which could impact our plans for construction of some water quality improvement projects. The revised Senate Bill 10 and the plan for a reservoir south are gaining support.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Martin County participated in a number of Earth Day activities last weekend. We had a booth at the H2O Expo in downtown Stuart, where the main message was how individuals can do their part in improving water quality by respecting the summer-time fertilizer application ban. The program's mascot, "Flo Mingo," was a huge hit with everyone. To learn more about how you can help protect water quality, and find a list of compliant fertilizer products, go to www.befloridiannow.org.
- We also hosted 23 members of a local geocachers group for a clean-up event on a county-owned conservation land, the Gomez property in Hobe Sound. An Earth Day service event in Martin County has become an annual event for the geocachers, and the Ecosystem staff applauds their efforts and appreciates the great partnership to restore, protect, and preserve our natural areas.
- Our Mosquito Control Division had a booth at the Master Gardener's Plant Sale to share information about their "Tip and Toss" program focused on reducing standing water in yards and thereby reducing mosquitoes that carry Zika and Dengue. This is a great reminder for residents to empty any standing water in areas around your home. The County is also hosting a month long tire amnesty event where residents can drop off tires for free. Tires are one of the more prolific breeding sites for *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* and we are actively encouraging residents to clean up any potential breeding sites around their homes. Four of the five events have already occurred, and the last tire collection event is this **Saturday, April 29th from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Kiwanis Post Family Park in Indiantown (15700 SW Warfield Blvd., Indiantown, FL 34956).**
- For those interested, the next Water Ambassadors Program is scheduled for **May 12 from 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.** The Water Ambassador educational program is focused on increasing awareness about the impacts of stormwater and personal activities on the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon watersheds. The program goal is to foster behavioral change concerning personal activities including the reduced use of fertilizer and pesticides, picking up after your pet, and proper maintenance of septic tanks.