

## **Martin County remains steadfast in commitment to healthy waterways**

STUART, Fla (April 2, 2021) - Earlier today, it was announced that there is a potential for encountering Blue Green Algae (BGA) in and around Lake Okeechobee. On Monday, March 29, BGA was visible at the Port Mayaca (S-308) on the lakeside, with the existence of microcystins detected at .79 parts per billion (ppb). Subsequent testing done at the St. Lucie Lock and Dam (S-80) measured levels of microcystins at .34 ppb. While these are trace amounts, Martin County reminds residents and visitors to maintain vigilance when recreating on and near the water in an area where BGA is present.

### **What Martin County is doing**

Martin County continues to advocate on behalf of residents and the environment. Working with a team of experts, the county has been actively engaged in the development of a new Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). The county's approach prioritizes the health and wellness of the community and environment, and focuses on the harmful impacts that lake discharges have on the estuary and near shore coral reefs.

### **What residents can do**

Members of the public are encouraged to participate in upcoming meetings including April 12 and 15, with the US Army Corps of Engineers and other stakeholders. Public comment is welcome during designated public comment periods. Key messages for Martin County include:

- There is no historic natural connection of the St. Lucie Estuary to Lake Okeechobee
- There is no ecological benefit in the St. Lucie Estuary relationship to Lake Okeechobee
- Salinity is the only performance measure modeled but not the only consideration for impacts and harm to the St. Lucie Estuary
- There is no performance measure for Harmful Algal Bloom impacts
- There is no performance measure for impacts to near shore Coral reefs
- There is no water quality treatment for discharges to the St Lucie Estuary
- Preventing non-emergency discharges to the St Lucie Estuary doesn't preclude improvements to the rest of the system

LOSOM PDT Technical Workshop (Part 1)

Monday, April 12, 2021, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

<https://usace1.webex.com/meet/lisa.e.aley>

+1-844-800-2712 US Toll Free

+1-669-234-1177 US Toll

Access code: 199 737 9512

Password: 1234

LOSOM PDT Technical Workshop (Part 2)

Thursday, April 15, 2021, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

<https://usace1.webex.com/meet/lisa.e.aley>

+1-844-800-2712 US Toll Free

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**About the Martin County Board of County Commissioners**

The five-member Board of County Commissioners is the legislative governing body of Martin County. Each Commissioner is elected to a four-year term by voters in the countywide area. Chapter 125.01 of the Florida Statutes establishes the specific duties and powers of the Board of County Commissioners. Exercising their legislative powers, the County Commission adopts ordinances (local laws) and resolutions to establish policies and programs to protect the health, safety and general welfare of Martin County residents.

**Media Contact**

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