

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA**

RESOLUTION NO. 19-1.20

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA TO SUPPORT THE INCREASED PROTECTION
OF THE ST. LUCIE ESTUARY AND NORTHERN EVERGLADES.**

WHEREAS, the Martin County Board of County Commissioners has consistently urged the state and federal governments to reduce freshwater releases from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie Estuary, in conjunction with urging accelerated rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike, full implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), completion of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project, authorization of the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) and the identification of additional water storage and conveyance systems; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Martin County have directly contributed to these solutions through voluntary assessment, generating \$75 million for land acquisition, including the purchase of 45,000 acres for CERP projects, as well as \$27 million for the C-44 Reservoir Project; and

WHEREAS, these projects are vital to balance regulatory requirements while maintaining safe lake levels during extreme storm events; and

WHEREAS, without the completion of these projects, large influxes of lake water lower salinity levels and reduce water quality in the estuary, damaging the economy, aquatic life and human health; and

WHEREAS, the volume of Lake Okeechobee releases in 2018 resulted in abnormally low salinity levels that combined with elevated water temperatures and high concentrations of nutrients in the C-44 canal and St. Lucie Estuary, creating ideal conditions for harmful blue green algae blooms in these waterbodies; and

WHEREAS, harmful algal blooms and/or fish lesions were observed in the St. Lucie Estuary in 2005, 2007, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2018, years when excessive amounts of water were pumped out of Lake Okeechobee through the C-44 canal; and

WHEREAS, immediate actions need to take place to prevent the worsening of conditions that contribute to harmful algal blooms and the degradation of quality of life near the St. Lucie Estuary and Northern Everglades; and

WHEREAS, Governor Ron Desantis has established Executive Order 19-12 (“Achieving More Now for Florida’s Environment”), implementing major reforms to ensure the protection of Florida’s environment and water quality; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Brian Mast has filed HR 6700, also known as the “Stop Harmful Discharges Act,” making public health and safety the primary consideration for all authorized Central and Southern Florida projects by minimizing the potential for toxic cyanobacteria blooms and preventing harmful freshwater discharges into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 Water Resources Development Act includes language directing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to expedite completion of the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule to coincide with rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike in order to better manage lake levels.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER TO INCREASE PROTECTION OF THE ST. LUCIE ESTUARY AND NORTHERN EVERGLADES:

- A. The State of Florida Office of the Governor Executive Order Number 19-12 (Achieving More Now for Florida’s Environment);
- B. Congressman Brian Mast’s Harmful Algal Blooms Solutions Act to ensure that public health and safety are the top priorities in managing the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control system by protecting the sustainability of the estuarine ecology;
- C. A Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule that minimizes discharges from Lake Okeechobee and sends clean water south to meet freshwater flows;
- D. Implementation of state compliance monitoring for best management practices;
- E. Legislation that reduces land application of class AA biosolids;
- F. Allocating Amendment 1 funds for land acquisition and restoration as so stated in the Florida Constitution;
- G. Proceeding with design on Indian River Lagoon South C-23/24 South project;
- H. Completion of land purchase on Indian River Lagoon South C-23/24 North project;
- I. Establishing nutrient standards for phosphorus and nitrogen when water is discharged from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie River/Indian River Lagoon;
- J. The Governor’s budget recommendation for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s state program for septic to sewer local funding match.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 29TH DAY OF JANUARY 2019.

ATTEST:




CAROLYN TIMMANN, CLERK OF THE
CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA:


EDWARD V. CIAMPI, CHAIRMAN

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:


KRISTA A. STOREY,
ACTING COUNTY ATTORNEY