



Good Morning!

Fifteen years ago Hurricane Charley hit Florida as a strong Category 4 hurricane, the first to strike the state since Hurricane Opal in 1995. It was quickly followed by Hurricanes Frances, Ivan and Jeanne, making 2004 Florida's most destructive hurricane season on record.

I encourage you to be prepared this hurricane season, and have an emergency plan in place to protect yourself and your loved ones. To learn more about how you can prepare before a disaster occurs, visit FloridaDisaster.org. You can also download the [Aware & Prepare Mobile App for Indian River County](#) or sign up for alerts from the [Brevard Emergency Operations Center](#).

I consider it a great honor to represent all of the citizens and visitors of District 17. Please share [this link](#) with your friends and family so that they too can sign up for the [Mayfield Minute](#).

If you or someone you know needs my assistance, please don't hesitate to contact my office. My staff and I are here to serve you!

Expanding Lake Okeechobee Water Quality Monitoring

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) recently voted to expand water quality monitoring within the Northern Everglades watersheds and Lake Okeechobee.

These additional water quality measurements will fulfill the directives of Governor Ron DeSantis in his "Achieving More Now For Florida's Environment" Executive Order, which directs water management districts to provide data to support statewide water quality efforts. It will also assist the Blue-Green Algae Task Force in better understanding harmful algal blooms in Lake Okeechobee and the coastal estuaries in the Northern Everglades.

This program will increase the number of monitoring stations from 161 to 243 monitoring sites. SFWMD will monitor water quality across nearly 5.5 million acres of Lake Okeechobee and the three Northern Everglades watersheds. In addition to adding sampling sites, the Governing Board also increased the frequency of sampling from monthly to twice a month. They also expanded the parameters of what water quality indicators scientists will be measuring. This includes tracking nitrogen at sites where it was not previously collected, tracking water temperature, dissolved oxygen and algal blooms.

In the St. Lucie Watershed on the east coast, SFWMD will add 15 new sites, many of which will measure the local runoff from basins such as the C-23, C-24 and C-44 that provide a significant amount of the nutrient load reaching the St. Lucie Estuary but had not previously been monitored.

For more information or to view water quality data visit SFWMD.org.

Python Removal Efforts to Protect the Everglades

Pythons are an invasive species that disrupt the balance of the natural food chain. They have no natural predators, causing them to multiply without impediment which threatens the biodiversity in the Everglades and surrounding areas.

Recently, Governor Ron DeSantis joined the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the SFWMD to announce new efforts to remove pythons from the Greater Everglades.

"I'm excited to announce our efforts to more aggressively tackle the problem of this invasive species and to further protect the Greater Everglades," said Governor DeSantis. "Pythons are a threat to native wildlife and removing them is an important component of Everglades restoration."

The Governor has directed FWC and SFWMD to collaborate to do the following:

- Ensure python removal training programs are interchangeable.
- Share and jointly pursue research on new technology to help detect and remove pythons from the wild.
- Jointly host a Python Challenge every year as opposed to every third year.
- Develop agreements with local governments to expand access for state python removers on lands owned by local governments.
- Engage the public through a targeted education and outreach campaign that focuses on the importance of removing pythons from the Everglades.
- Create additional incentives for veterans to remove pythons.

Additionally, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, FWC and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has executed an agreement to allow for the removal of pythons in all state parks where pythons are found. This agreement allows an additional 134,648 acres of land to be accessible for python removal.

District 17 Highlights

Indian River County Legislative Delegation Meeting

The Indian River County Legislative Delegation Meeting will be held on Tuesday, **September 24, 2019** from 9:00 AM to Noon. The meeting will be held in the County Commission Chambers located at 1801 27th Street, Building A in Vero Beach.

Delegation members include Representative Erin Grall and myself. We will be meeting in preparation for the 2020 Legislative Session, which will begin on January 14, 2020. The primary purpose of this meeting is to allow government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and local citizens to address the Delegation and present their legislative priorities for the upcoming session.

If you would like to participate in the Delegation Meeting, please complete a Request Form and provide three (3) copies of all necessary supporting documents to Representative Erin Grall's office by September 17th. For more information please contact Ed Barenborg (772) 778-5005 or email Edward.Barenborg@myfloridahouse.gov.

FDOT Public Meeting: Harbor City Blvd & Pineda

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be hosting a public meeting to discuss proposed improvements at the intersection of Harbor City Blvd and Pineda Causeway.

[FDOT Public Meeting: Harbor City Blvd & Pineda Causeway](#)

Thursday, August 22, 2019

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Pineda Presbyterian Church

5650 N Wickham Rd, Melbourne

The proposed improvements include extending the westbound to southbound ramp auxiliary lane through the eastbound ramp intersection; Constructing an additional eastbound to southbound right turn lane; Placing signals at the intersection of Harbor City Blvd and Pineda Causeway eastbound ramps.

The meeting will be an informal open house format, during which attendees may view project information, speak with FDOT team members to learn more about the project and provide input. Information about this project is also available online on the [FDOT District 5 website](#). If you have additional questions, please contact FDOT at (386)943-5388 or email Eliode.Joseph@dot.state.fl.us.

Indian River County Awarded Funds for IRL Restoration

This past week Representative Erin Grall and my office had the opportunity to present two checks totaling \$1.15 million to Indian River County to support water quality restoration in the Indian River Lagoon.

During the 2019 Legislative Session, I am proud that Representative Grall and I were able to secure \$500,000 to support Phase II of the North Sebastian Septic to Sewer conversion project, and \$650,000 for the North Relief Aquatic Plant Project.

The North Sebastian Septic to Sewer project will support 150 conversions from septic to sewer for residential and businesses that are still operating on poorly maintained, and failing septic systems. Septic systems contribute pollutants to surface waters, especially in areas with highly permeable (sandy) soils like the Indian River Lagoon basin. Addressing septic tanks is an important component in water quality restoration.

The North Relief Canal Aquatic Plant Project is a regional pollution control system designed to protect the Indian River Lagoon from excessive nutrient discharges from Indian River Farms Water Control District's North Relief Canal. Pilot data indicates that this project should remove 7,045 lbs of nitrogen and 1,083 lbs of phosphorus per year from going into the Lagoon.

Follow me on Facebook and Twitter, and visit my [Senate website](#)



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