



## Good Morning!

It was an honor to serve as the Chair of the Senate Environment, Natural Resources and General Government Appropriations Committee during the 2020 Legislative Session. This year the Florida Legislature funded a number of critical environmental priorities, including \$50 million for Springs Restoration. This is in addition to \$100 million that was appropriated for springs the previous year.



Springs provide a window into Florida's vast groundwater system and are a barometer of the condition of the state's primary source of drinking water. Recently, Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced 21 new springs projects, as well as ongoing multi-year projects, that will be supported with this funding. These springs projects range from land acquisition to septic to sewer conversion, to enhanced water quality monitoring, and additional restoration efforts that will improve the quality of water throughout Florida and reduce the effects of harmful algal blooms.

With this funding the St. Johns River Water Management District was awarded \$1.1 million for the Apopka West Reuse Storage Facility and Reclaimed Water Extension project that will provide nearly 3.48 million gallons per day of reclaimed water, benefiting Wekiwa and Rock springs.

For more information on Florida's Springs restoration project funding, you may visit [Floridadep.gov/springs/restoration-funding](http://Floridadep.gov/springs/restoration-funding).

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

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## Proposed Constitutional Amendments 1 and 2

As voters and engaged citizens, it is our civic duty to responsibly educate ourselves on important changes to the Florida Constitution. There are currently six Amendments up for consideration on this year's ballot and each should be weighed seriously, because repealing any amendment that has passed would require a new ballot initiative garnering 60% of the vote in a subsequent election year.

I have previously provided the ballot language for the [proposed Constitutional Amendments](#) and over the next few weeks I will be highlighting additional information about each proposal to assist you in making an informed decision on Election Day.

**Amendment 1: Citizen Requirement to Vote in Florida Elections** was placed on the ballot through a citizen's initiative. This measure provides that only United States citizens who are at least eighteen years of age, permanent residents of Florida, and registered to vote, as provided by law, shall be qualified to vote in a Florida election.

A Yes vote on this measure would limit voting in Florida elections to only United States citizens who are at least 18 years old, permanent Florida residents, and registered to vote in the state. This language would clearly articulate who can and cannot vote in Florida elections specifically.

A No vote on this measure would keep the current language in the Florida Constitution that every citizen in the United States who is at least 18 years old, a permanent resident of the state, and registered to vote in the state can vote.

**Amendment 2: Raising Florida's Minimum Wage** was placed on the ballot through a citizen's initiative. This measure raises the minimum wage to \$10.00 per hour effective September 30, 2021. Each September 30th thereafter, minimum wage shall increase by \$1.00 per hour until the minimum wage reaches \$15.00 per hour on September 30th, 2026. From that point forward, future minimum wage increases shall revert to being adjusted annually for inflation starting September 30th, 2027.

A Yes vote on this measure would increase the minimum wage to \$15 by 2026, with a \$1.46 increase in 2021 to \$10. The tipped minimum wage would also increase to \$12 by 2026.

A No vote on this measure would keep the current \$8.56 minimum wage in place, while continuing to increase with inflation.

In order for a proposed amendment to be adopted into the Florida Constitution, a 60% vote in its favor is required. For more detailed information on the 2020 proposed Constitutional Amendments, please visit the [Florida Division of Elections website](#).

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## Red Snapper Season

The Fall Red Snapper season for private recreational anglers and state for-hire operations in the Gulf of Mexico is beginning soon. Red Snapper fishing will be open three consecutive weekends including: Oct. 17, 18, 24, 25, 31st and Nov. 1. During this season, private recreational anglers may harvest red snapper in Gulf state and federal waters. However, state for-hire operations are limited to fishing for red snapper in Gulf state waters only.

These additional days are possible because of the State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS). The State Reef Fish Survey was developed specifically to provide more robust data for management of red snapper and other important reef fish, and has allowed FWC the unprecedented opportunity to manage Gulf red snapper in state and federal waters.

All anglers fishing from private recreational vessels must sign up as a State Reef Fish Angler to target red snapper and several other reef fish in state and federal waters, even if they are exempt

from fishing license requirements. Sign up as a State Reef Fish Angler for free at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com) or by visiting any location you can purchase a license.

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## District 17 Highlights

### Eastern Florida State College Fall Term CARES Grants

Eastern Florida State College (EFSC) received \$4.4 million in emergency federal CARES grant funding earlier this year and has awarded \$2.7million to 7,300 students impacted by COVID-19 in Spring and Summer Terms. This funding is to assist students with expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19 including, food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and childcare.

Fall Term students are eligible to apply if they have not previously recieved a grant. Applicants must meet the general student financial aid eligibility requirements, have been registered in at least one Fall 2020 class, and have submitted a 2020 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Under federal criteria, the following students are not eligible: Dual-enrolled, international and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students; Students in the online Bachelor of Nursing program, transient students and non-degree students; or students with ineligible Satisfactory Academic Progress status.

To apply, EFSC students should log in to the [myEFSC Student Services Portal](#) and use the CARES Act Student Emergency Funding link to determine eligibility and to apply online.

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### Indian River Lagoon Shoreline Preservation

Earlier this year, the Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) permanently protected three parcels of land containing critically important habitat along a mile of the Indian River Lagoon shoreline.

First, IRLT acquired a 65-acre property along Indian River Blvd near the hospital. The land had been owned by the estate of the late Paul and Camille Hoffmann of Stuart, Florida. This acquisition creates a continuous stretch of conservation property along the Lagoon from the Merrill P. Barber Bridge, north to Grand Harbor. With this purchase, two miles of the Lagoon's western shoreline, which includes mangroves and saltwater ponds, is now permanently preserved.

The Land Trust also acquired a 30-acre undeveloped parcel of land in Winter Beach on the Lagoon. The property is situated east of US Highway 1, a half mile south of the 50-acre Toni Robinson Waterfront Trail.

Finally, IRLT acquired a 35-acre property along the western shore of the Lagoon south of the Alma Lee Loy Bridge. This property, which is mostly wetland, also adjoins the Lagoon Greenway, a possible expansion property for the popular trail.

With these acquisitions the Land Trust has protected approximately 1,200 acres, including 12 miles of lagoon shoreline.

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