



WEST PALM BEACH FISHING CLUB

~ Established 1934 ~



July 1, 2016

Board of County Commissioners
Palm Beach County
301 N. Olive Ave.
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Attn: Steve L. Abrams

Dear Commissioner Abrams:

On behalf of the over 1,300 members of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club (WPBFC) I write to share our concern regarding how storm water is being managed in Palm Beach County. The algae bloom occurring in Martin County is a threat to public health and an environmental catastrophe that is having significant impacts on jobs and businesses in the region. While not nearly as widespread, algae are showing up in Palm Beach County's C-51 canal, freshwater lakes connected to the C-51 and in portions of the Lake Worth Lagoon that are in close proximity to where the C-51 discharges into the lagoon. Summertime algae blooms are not unusual. However, the scale of the recent outbreak and an unusually wet winter season combined with high temperatures during the normally wet summer season is cause for concern. This algae crisis should give us all pause.

Unfortunately, the health and environmental issues associated with continued large scale freshwater discharges are not likely to go away anytime soon. They are the unintended consequences of widespread draining of the land to accommodate agriculture and regional growth. Government inaction on critical water management projects have exacerbated the problem. The WPBFC urges you to take action:

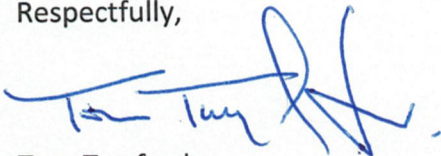
- Implore Governor Rick Scott and Florida legislators to spend Amendment 1 money as it was intended.
- Use your political influence to urge our federal representatives to fund and expeditiously implement the most critical parts of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project and secure land south of Lake Okeechobee for additional storage, treatment and conveyance.
- The Palm Beach County Commission's current approach to large-scale regional growth will only continue to compound the water management problems we are now facing. Continuing to approve massive development projects will further stress our ability to

manage water. You must hold developers accountable and think about the long-term impacts each project will have on the region, not just the short term benefits so widely touted by the developers.

- Give water managers increased flexibility by building the C-51 Reservoir. It will not solve Palm Beach County's water management problems, but it will certainly help.
- Sit down with large land owners, agricultural interests, the South Florida Water Management District, the Army Corps of Engineers and other community partners to find common ground on ways to build filtration marshes in our western region, and to construct additional wastewater and stormwater treatment areas within our urban watershed, similar to Wakodahatchee and Green Cay.
- Initiate incentives to convert septic tanks to public sewer systems, especially those located in close proximity to freshwater lakes connected to major drainage canals and the Lake Worth Lagoon.

The waters of Palm Beach County are not immune to the same algal outbreak that is occurring in Martin County. Enclosed (attached) is a copy of the WPBFC's most recent *Tight Lines* magazine, featuring an article titled, *How to Kill an Estuary...and How to Save it*. The article offers specific solutions to the current water management crisis we face. Through the decades the WPBFC has advocated and supported numerous county projects that protect and improve public access to the waterfront. Additionally, our organization has partnered with Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management on many marine and estuarine enhancement efforts. Don't let the county's huge public investment in the Lake Worth Lagoon be degraded. Please know that the WPBFC is willing to assist the county in any capacity it can on this issue. Your leadership is needed at this critical juncture. We hope you can find the political will to take action before it is too late.

Respectfully,



Tom Twyford
President

Encl:

Cc: Verdenia Baker, PBC Administrator
Rob Robbins, Director PBC ERM

STEVE,
WE NEED your
LEADERSHIP on
this ISSUE -
TOM T.