

**Want to Take Action** by contacting your legislators on SW Florida’s Water Quality, Lake O releases and/or Everglades Restoration?  
It’s as easy as sending an email or calling your best friend.

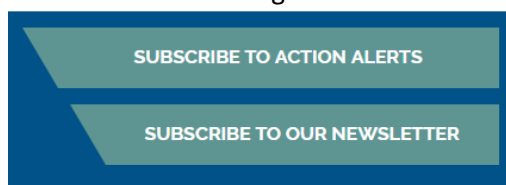
**Email** *Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF)* has made it very easy for **everyone** to contact our legislators to address water quality in southwest Florida. Their website has a link that provides an easy way for you to send a letter to our state, Congressional, and local officials. You can use SCCF’s preformatted letter or create your own letter.

**Captains for Clean Water** <https://captainsforcleanwater.org/> has a preformatted letter addressed to Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson. Captain’s letter focuses on a single issue - Everglades Agricultural Area SB 10 Reservoir. Sending both would not hurt even though you’ll be sending a letter to Rubio and Nelson twice. More voices, more action.

Rae Ann Wessel, Natural Resource Policy Director with SCCF is a driving force in our community (along with Calusa Waterkeeper and Captains for Clean Water) to help resolve our water problems. Rae Ann personally created an email list that includes all representatives (local or not) who are connected to our water woes. Be assured that you’ll be reaching out to the right people for any topic you care to write about. **Want to call instead of email?** We’ve included phone numbers in case you would rather call instead of sending an email.

Richard Scott, Governor	850.488.7146	<p>Following are <b>South Florida Water Management District</b> Governing Board members. They don’t have a direct phone number so call and leave a message which will be forwarded to the board member.</p> <p>561.682.6262</p> <p><u>Federico Fernandez</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Chairman, Miami-Dade Co.</p> <p><u>Melanie Peterson</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Vice Chair, At-large member for an area that includes St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties</p> <p><u>Rick Barber</u>, SFWMD Big Cypress Basin Board Chair, Lee, Collier, Hendry and Charlotte counties</p> <p><u>Carlos Diaz</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Rep- Broward Co.</p> <p><u>Jim Moran</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Rep – Palm Beach Co.</p> <p><u>Brandon Tucker</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Rep, At-large member for an area that includes St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties</p> <p><u>Jamie Weisinger</u>, SFWMD Governing Board Rep, At-large from Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, Highlands, Glades, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola and Polk counties</p> <p><u>Dan O’Keefe</u>, SFWMD, Governing Board Rep - Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola and Polk counties</p> <p><u>Sam Accursio</u>, SFWMD Board Member Miami-Dade Co.</p>
Adam Putnam, Comm., FL Dept. of Agriculture	No direct phone #	
Marco Rubio, Senator	239.318.6464	
Bill Nelson, Senator	239.334.7760	
Francis Rooney, Representative	239.599.6033	
Tom Rooney, Representative	941.575.9101	
Heather Fitzenhagen, Representative	239.533.2440	
Matthew Caldwell , Representative	239.694.0161	
Ray Rodrigues, Representative	239.433.6501	
Dane Eagle, Representative	239.772.1291	
Lizbeth Benacquisto, Senator	239.338.2570	
Kathleen Passidomo, Senator	239.417.6205	
John Manning, Lee Co. Comm.	239.533.2224	
Larry Kiker, Lee Co. Comm.	239.533.2223	
Frank Mann, Lee Co. Comm.	239.533.2225	
Cecil Pendergrass, Lee Co. Comm.	239.533.2227	
Brian Hamman, Lee Co. Comm.	239.533.2226	
Noah Valenstein, DEP Secretary,	850.245.2118	
Drew Bartlett, DEP Deputy Secretary for Ecosystems Restoration	850.245.2118	
Ernie Marks, Ex. Dir. SFWMD	561.682.6993	

In addition to providing a system to connect you to your elected and appointed officials you can sign up for SCCF **alerts** that’ll give you a heads up about new issues that impact our area and a weekly water quality report. To sign up for alerts go to [www.SCCF.org](http://www.SCCF.org) scroll down and on the right look for:



**TO SEND** a letter to your legislators go to the next page.

8/24/2018

## **HOW TO SEND A LETTER VIA EMAIL TO LEGISLATORS**


You have three choices when you send this email. 1) You can use the preformatted letter – see next page. 2) You can change the preformatted letter by deleting some text and adding your own. 3) You can delete the entire preformatted letter and tell your own story.

There's no spell check or grammar check if you type your own story in SCCF's website so you may want to create your document on your computer and copy & paste it into the email. (If you need help on how to delete and/or copy and paste call me. Deedee Cheek 239.541.1106 or 239.826.5710.)

It was recommended by Alex Horn, SCCF Public Outreach Coordinator (point person for this part of the website) that when we compose our "own story" she suggested using some key phrases. *Concerned voter* always works along with any tie back to *economic impact such as tourism, fishing, restaurants, hotels, etc. in addition to our overall lifestyle.*

**TALKING POINTS** - Please check out the attached **Talking Points** from SSCF and Calusa Waterkeeper. Each agency created a list of questions for all of us to use to assist in getting answers from our legislators.

Go to [www.sccf.org](http://www.sccf.org)

1. Click on  under the **Take Action on Water Quality** banner. This should be the first screen that comes up.
2. This will take you to the Demand Action on Water Crisis page.
3. **Fill in your personal information.** (**Note** that on the bottom of the blue box where you've filled in your information you have two options about receiving information about this campaign.)
4. If you want to use the preformatted letter just click **Send Email**.
5. If you want to change or delete the preformatted letter you'll need to **click inside the white text box**.
6. To navigate inside the text box point and click. To move text up and down you'll need to use the up and down arrow keys.
7. Type in or copy and paste your story and send your email.

**IF YOU GET AN ERROR AFTER SENDING YOUR EMAIL** ....Alex told me that SCCF is having a problem with the software but your email did go through.

You should receive some responses in a few days..

Deedee Cheek 239.541.1106 239.826.5710

## **SCCF'S PREFORMATTED LETTER**

Dear Official,

Southwest Florida and our Gulf coast is in crisis from harmful blooms causing an unprecedented mass mortality of aquatic life not seen before at these levels in our area. Our waterways and beaches are littered with dolphins, manatees, fish, birds, shellfish, and invertebrates. The cause of these blooms is pollution from harmful high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus.

Regulations that protect the public health, safety, and welfare are not government overreach, they are the primary function of government, and necessary to protect the natural resources our economy and quality of life depend upon.

Here are issues the State must address to improve water quality and prevent future disasters:

1. Stop adding nutrients to the water. Prevention is vastly cheaper than clean up. We must capture and clean water on land before it flows into lakes, rivers, bays, and the Gulf.
2. Stop untreated agricultural runoff. Ag landowners are not required to hold and treat stormwater on their own land. They pump their nutrient laden water directly into lakes, rivers and taxpayer funded infrastructure built for other uses. They must be required to capture, store and clean their runoff as urban areas do.
3. Stop all land application of bio solids/septage that add to the nutrient loading of state waters.
4. Upgrade urban runoff: More development requires more space to capture and time to treat water, allowing it to filter into the ground before discharging to the canals, rivers, lakes, and estuaries.
5. Stop sewage treatment plant discharges to public waters.
6. Require inspection and maintenance of septic systems in proximity to waterways and in high density.
7. Reduce or eliminate fertilizer especially in waterfront areas. Many areas in this region have natural phosphorus rich soils that don't need additional fertilizer. Test your soil, plant a native landscape that needs no fertilizer, and observe the summer blackout fertilizer ban.
8. Advanced treatment of reuse Water: Using water more than once is a fundamental conservation concept. Reuse water retains high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. The nutrients can be absorbed by lawns and gardens but if it runs off into canals and adjacent waters its contributing to the nutrient problem. Advanced wastewater treatment is needed.

Regards,

Your Name

## **TALKING POINTS FOR 2018 CANDIDATES**

Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation has a list of talking points for the 2018 candidates. You can *select from the list below and add into your letter, email, phone call or for use at public meetings.*

### Governor, Secretary of Agriculture, and State Legislative

- What would you do to improve water quality?
  - Would you support requiring Advanced Wastewater Treatment to remove nutrients from reuse water systems a demonstrated source of excess nutrients?
  - Would you support broader, stricter water quality standards for nutrients and chemicals?
  - Would you support updating stormwater standards for urban and agriculture?
  - Would you require agriculture treat their stormwater before it leaves their properties?
  - Would you support eliminating the inequitable "presumption of compliance" with water quality standards given to agriculture?
- Florida's water supply, public safety, coastlines, and economy are being and will increasingly be affected by rising sea levels. What do you propose to proactively prepare Florida's population and infrastructure to adapt to changing conditions?
- What is your position on Energy production and supply in Florida? Do you support Fracking? Why? Do you support offshore oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico?
- The State dismantled the former Department of Community Affairs which administered growth management laws in favor of the Department of Economic Affairs which focused on promoting economic interests. Would you support any reinstatement of growth management principles or do you believe that authority should be left to the local government?
- Do you support the current legislative effort to overturn the recent Land and Water Conservation Amendment court victory which was to require the legislature to honor the intent of 75% of the voters to purchase conservation lands?

### Congressional Offices:

- Would you support restoring EPA regulations and funding for establishing water quality standards?
- Would you support restoring EPA funding for the Healthy Beach monitoring program?
- Would you support Florida establishing water quality standards for cyanobacteria blooms as 22 other states have already done?
- What is your plan to support Everglades restoration?
- What is your position on Energy production? Why? Do you support expanding leasing for oil drilling off US waters? Why?
- Do you support the current price support for sugar even though it benefits large corporations not family farmers?
- Do you support the plans to eliminate the Water of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule that seeks to apply water quality standards under the Clean Water Act?

### Lee County Commissioners

#### Water Quality

- What would you do to improve water quality?
- Would you support reactivating the stormwater utility in Lee County?
- What is the County doing to ensure the enforcement of the Fertilizer Ordinance?

## Conservation 2020

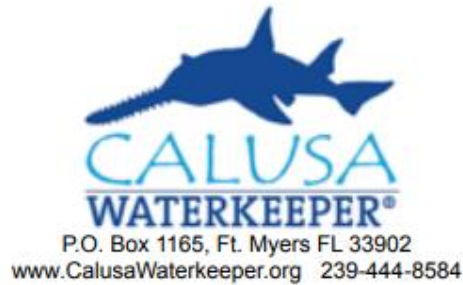
- Do you support continuing to fund the Conservation 2020 program for the purposes 84% of Lee County voters supported or do you think the program has completed its task?
- Will you commit to using the 40 million remaining that was from ad valorem assessments on the program it was collected to support or do you support spending it on water quality treatment projects?
- How do you propose to replenish the funding and what level of funding do you support?

## Impact Fees

- What is your position on new development paying for its impact on services, schools, roads, parks etc through the payment of Impact Fees?
- What % of impact fees do you support? Why?
- How will you specifically address the transportation funding deficit facing Lee County and what will you do to discourage development sprawl which creates additional transportation and infrastructure problems?

## Coastal Resiliency

- Southeast Florida Counties have established a compact to address and protect their communities from the effects of climate change and sea level rise.
- What are your ideas to address sea level rise issues here in Lee County and along the West Coast?
- Many of the existing land use rules have been amended to allow additional growth in environmentally sensitive areas. How will you address future requests to change the comprehensive plan or rezone areas that contain rare and unique natural resources?
- Many housing developments have been added in the Density Reduction/Groundwater Recharge (DRGR) area along Corkscrew Road. What will you do to ensure the promised environmental protections are effectively implemented?



## CALUSA WATERKEEPER **CALL TO ACTION** TO ADDRESS HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS

The toxic blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) extending from Lake Okeechobee to the coasts represents decades of failed water policy implementation. A perfect storm of lax enforcement and underfunding at the local, state and national levels has culminated in this harmful algae bloom (HAB) tsunami.

Calusa Waterkeeper (CWK) calls on political leaders to take the following actions:

- Post bilingual signs and erect temporary barriers warning the public of potential dangers at all public access points along the Caloosahatchee and other waterbodies with HABs. Resolve confusing jurisdiction as to which agency has this responsibility.
- Declare a State of Emergency.
- The US House of Representatives needs to pass legislation that supports the provisions of the bipartisan Senate Bill 1057, The Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2017.
- Relaunch and fund the Florida HAB Task Force (TF) defunded in 2001 (but still enabled by Florida Statute 379.2271) with the objective of adopting a modern response strategy, similar to other states that utilize numeric thresholds, to guide state agency action on HABs.
- The Florida Environmental Regulation Commission should consider cyanotoxins as regulated contaminants in Florida with input from the re-instated Florida HAB TF.
- Revise Florida stormwater treatment regulations to increase non-point stormwater runoff treatment capacity as part of the criteria in the “Design Requirements for Stormwater Treatment Systems in Florida.” Greater nutrient sequestering capacity will address the increased frequency of extreme storm events and the nutrient pollution that results.
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) should revise the total maximum daily load (TMDL) Prioritization Criteria to increase the number of nutrient impaired water bodies selected for TMDL implementation in each five-year cycle. This will require Increased funding for implementation. Only 15 of FL’s 54 basins are selected for TMDL implementation during each fiveyear cycle. It may take up to 20 years for TMDL implementation to begin under the current criteria.
- Revise FDEP Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) for nutrient impaired waterbodies with higher nutrient load reduction requirements reflecting current loading rates. As is, some BMAPs rely on nutrient load reductions determined from land use 14 years ago.
- Big sugar is not the problem per se, but it blocks the solution to the problem. The State must purchase an additional 52,000 acres in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) for a storage reservoir and filter marshes. This will not solve the problem, but it is the single most important action that Florida can take. Amendment 1 provides the necessary funds.
- Implement ALL options in the University of Florida Water Institute’s technical review “Options to Reduce High Volume Freshwater Flows to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries and Move More Water from Lake Okeechobee to the Southern Everglades (March 2015). The current HAB is of historic magnitude. We are at a tipping point. If political leaders fail to take action, history is doomed to repeat itself. The science is clear as to what has to be done, but does the political will exist?