

The Flow

February 2016 Newsletter
John Capece, Editor

Special Events & Meetings

- Feb 3: [Riverwatch board meeting](#) at 6:30pm in LaBelle
- Feb-Mar: [Franklin Lock & Dam tours \(Free\)](#)
- Feb 27-28: [Swamp Cabbage Festival](#) in LaBelle
- Mar 19: [Riverwatch annual membership meeting](#) in Ft. Myers
- Mar 25: [Billy's Creek cleanup](#) in Ft. Myers

Editorial Disclaimer
Visit the CRCA web site
crca.caloosahatchee.org
Join us at [Facebook](#)



CRCA now has highway billboards thanks to the efforts of Phil Schwartz.

CRCA Annual Meeting March 19



Save the date! From 4pm-7pm on Sat, Mar 19 CRCA will hold its annual meeting to welcome members and kick off its 2016-17 programs. Hosting the meeting is VP Gene Gibson who has reserved the beautiful Gathering Room in High Point Place on the Ft. Myers riverfront. RSVP is required. [\[Gathering Room View\]](#) [\[High Point Location\]](#)

Win a Canoe at Swamp Cabbage



The Riverwatch Canoe Contest is back again this year thanks to The Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. You can buy tickets from CRCA directors or at the Swamp Cabbage Festival's Riverwatch exhibit, Feb 27-28 in LaBelle. Chance tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. It's always great fun to play & support CRCA [\[Old Town 14.5-Ft Canoe\]](#)

[\[Prizes\]](#) [\[Tickets Online\]](#) [\[Canoe Description\]](#)

Vue - an After-Christmas Fire Sale



In a commentary CRCA VP Gene Gibson reminds us that Andres Duany, the urban planner who prepared the Downtown Ft Myers Plan, said "the City sells itself too cheaply." If the city approves what the new Vue developer wants, this will amount to an after-Christmas fire sale that will prove Duany right. [\[Gene Gibson\]](#) [\[David Ulrich\]](#) [\[Joint letter\]](#)

Does Vue Benefit Ft Myers?



In trying to keep the river walk provision of the original Vue development permit, Bob & Kerry Holley wrote to the News Press, "Many condominium developments are coming; please don't give away the best parts of our beautiful city without keeping our riverfront accessible and usable for all citizens. [\[News-Press\]](#)

Waterkeeper Affiliate Application



In November CRCA submitted its application to Waterkeeper Alliance seeking Affiliate status. Riverwatch has desired Waterkeeper status since 2007. But only in 2014 did Waterkeeper rules change to make this possible. To become a full Waterkeeper member requires a formal staff position & boat. [\[Jurisdiction Map\]](#) [\[Waterkeeper Affiliate Proposal\]](#)

Save Our Downtown Boat Ramp!



CRCA-Riverwatch is opposing the possible closing of a popular boat ramp in downtown Fort Myers. We've sent postcards warning boaters and other taxpayers to keep a close eye on what the city does with the boat ramp on Edwards Drive. Help save our downtown boat ramp! [\[Fox 4\]](#) [\[Letter by Ron & Joan Pierce\]](#) [\[Interview with CRCA VP Gene Gibson\]](#)

Lots of Water Falling & Flowing



Ft Myers received 13 inches of rain in Jan 2016, exceeding any January since records began in 1902. Lake Okeechobee water levels are now above 16ft. Despite a high Lake with a weak dike, SFWMD decided to backpump farm water into the Lake. Flow to the estuary at S-79 exceeded 14,000 cfs on Jan 29.

[[News-Press](#)] [[Backpumping](#)] [[Hutchcraft](#)] [[Powers](#)] [[S-79 Flow](#)]

Challenge the Status Quo



Ray Judah wrote: "Mayor Ruane portrays to know the facts concerning restoration of the Caloosahatchee and our coastal estuaries. In fact, he represents the status quo of policy makers at the local and state level that have ignored or failed to understand the water budget in the Lake O watershed." [[Cape Coral Daily Breeze](#)]

Not Retreating on River Hall



The News Press is covering citizen opposition to the River Hall development. Thornberry and his neighbors at River Hall scored their first legal victory in a battle with Lee County to preserve the rural dream they were sold. FGCU professor Paul Asfour doesn't think they are done fighting developers. [[News-Press](#)] [[Photo](#)] [[Guest Opinion](#)]

C-43 Reservoir Construction On



After years of remaining on hold, the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir just west of LaBelle and south of SR80, is seeing activity again after years of delay due to lack of funding. The half-billion dollar project cost is shared between the federal government and SFWMD. [[Caloosa Belle](#)] [[Map](#)]

Ceitus Legal Action Update

**CIRCUIT COURT
LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**
PHIL BUCHANAN, et al.
Petitioners, v.
CITY OF CAPE CORAL
Case No. 14-CA-001204
STATEMENT OF FACTS

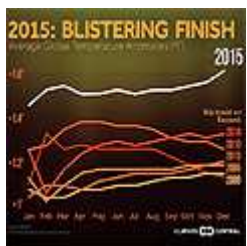
A Ceitus case court date is set for April 2016. Before that the parties are required to undergo a non-binding mediation process that was held Jan 20. John Cassani represented Riverwatch. Another session is planned. [[Cape Coral](#)] [[Exhibit E](#)] [[Arbitration](#)] [[Hearing](#)] [[Mediation](#)] [[EPA Letter](#)]

Thanks Karen & RRRTR



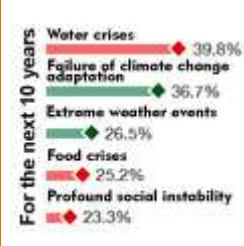
Riverwatch received an \$800 donation from the River Roots & Ruts Trail Run held on a rainy Jan 10 morning. Karen Bickford organized the 50+ volunteers to manage the 300+ runner event at Caloosahatchee Regional Park. Riverwatch provided 7 volunteers. [[Photo 1](#)] [[Photo 2](#)] [[Photo 3](#)] [[Photo 4](#)]

2015 Crushed Global Records



NOAA and NASA have both confirmed what scientists have been predicting for months: 2015 was globally the hottest year ever recorded. Not only was 2015 the warmest year on record globally, it beat the previous record, set in 2014, by a wide margin. [[Climate Reality Project](#)] [[Average annual temperature](#)] [[Land and ocean temperature](#)] [[Website](#)]

Water is Top Long-term Risk



The World Economic Forum ranked water crises as the top global risk to industry and society over the next decade. Last year, water crises earned the top spot as the most damaging short-term risk. Water has become a serious social issue and an urgent political matter. [[Circle of Blue](#)] [[Graphic](#)]

Looming Water Crisis



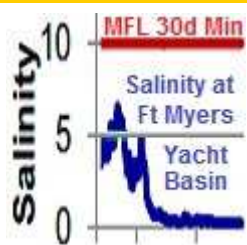
By ignoring the current and ongoing underlying policy issues mired in special interest influence, they maintain the illusion that costly water projects are the ultimate solution. Competing interests for water result in the "tragedy of the commons." [[News Press Guest Editorial by John Cassani](#)]

New Riverwatch Web Site



Check out the new Riverwatch web page redesigned and programmed by Nargis Abduvohidova. In addition to the new banner and photos, the web page is now mobile friendly. The address remains CRCA.caloosahatchee.org. [[New Web Page](#)] [[Renew Your Membership](#)]

Salinity Flat-lines in January



Estuary salinity has been below MFL 30-day limits during January. Rains and watershed runoff since the middle of the month have completely flat-lined salinity levels, highly unusual for January. Next will come the Lake O discharges. [[Conditions](#)] [[Salinity Poster](#)] [[Phil Schwartz](#)] [[Archive](#)] [[WINK News](#)]

Dead Fish Removal Authorized



Sanibel's Natural Resources Department is allowing homeowners to remove dead fish strewn along its island beaches. Possible causes of the fish kills are January's severe weather and moderate levels of red tide. Dead fish is not what you want on a beach, particularly at the peak of tourist season. [[NBC-2](#)]