

# The Flow

March 2016 Newsletter  
John Capece, Editor

## Special Events & Meetings

- Apr 9: [LaBelle Regional Park clean-up](#)
- Apr 16: [Earth Day at Wa-Ke Hatchee](#)
- Apr 19: [Bob Graham advocacy webinar](#)
- Apr 21: [Legislative Wrap-Up at FGCU](#)
- Apr 23: [Alva Oxbow Paddle](#)
- Apr 28: [Lake O Releases: Leaders Response in Ft. Myers](#)

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[crca.caloosahatchee.org](http://crca.caloosahatchee.org)  
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CRCA's new Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate program coverage area.

## Tampa Bay Times Covers River

**Tampa Bay Times**



Flood control shifts danger downriver

On Mar 20 Tampa Bay Times published a front page story on Lake O discharges to the Caloosahatchee. CRCA directors hosted the journalist investigating the issue. The hard truth is that Okeechobee discharges & our own watershed discharges are both problems...and we are solving neither. [\[Front Page\]](#) [\[Comments\]](#) [\[Graph\]](#) [\[Story\]](#) [\[Photo\]](#)

## Ready for Powerful Change



For more than two decades, Riverwatch has championed the Caloosahatchee: organizing cleanups, educating citizens and advocating for the region's troubled river. Allying itself with the Waterkeeper Alliance, the all-volunteer nonprofit is now an affiliate of the respected organization. [\[News-Press\]](#) [\[Proposal\]](#) [\[Video\]](#) [\[Introduction\]](#) [\[Presentation\]](#)

## See it, Report it, Stop it



See it - Report it - Stop it  
**239-444-8584**

As part of its new Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate program, Caloosahatchee Riverwatch has set up a water hotline for the public to call in and report water pollution and other water problems they observe in the Caloosahatchee, Lake O, Estero Bay and Charlotte Harbor region. 239-444-8584 [\[Water Hotline\]](#)

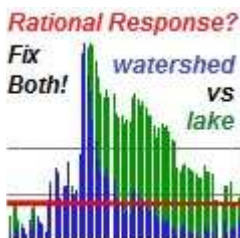
## Ready for a Waterkeeper



Thanks, Linda!

Thanks to the generosity of Linda & Daniel Mattos, Riverwatch now has a great boat awaiting the first Caloosahatchee Waterkeeper. It's a wonderful Triumph 170 in great condition. And thanks to the Severus Foundation, CRCA can begin a serious fundraising campaign to support hiring a Waterkeeper. [\[Triumph 170\]](#)

## Sources of Estuary Problem



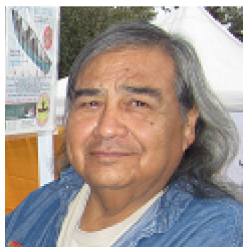
A debate raging back and forth is whether recent Caloosahatchee Estuary problems are from Lake O or the local watershed. It is a somewhat silly distinction since the local watershed is also dominated by agriculture. Nevertheless, analysis shows since Jan 15, Lake O = 49 days and watershed = 28 days. [\[Flow Graph\]](#) [\[Daily Breeze\]](#) [\[Clewiston\]](#)

## State Pushes Purchase to Feds



In 2015 the State of Florida balked on its 2008 agreement to buy EAA lands for water storage. Now Rep Clawson will try to get the Federal dollars for the purchase. This is yet another example of the state doing its best to create problems and expecting the Feds to fix them...but without regulations. [\[TCPalm\]](#) [\[Letter\]](#) [\[Hecker\]](#) [\[News\]](#) [\[Judah\]](#) [\[Cartoon\]](#)

## Joe Frank & Canoe Contest



Joe Frank, member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. was on hand to draw the winning tickets in the canoe contest at the 2016 Swamp Cabbage Festival. For the past many years, Joe has arranged for the canoe donation from the Tribe. Thanks, Joe! [\[Joe, Nargis, Linda & Meryem\]](#) [\[Happy Family\]](#) [\[Posing with Canoe\]](#)

## Supreme Court Upholds TMDL



In its first post-Scalia environmental action, the Supreme Court refused to hear the Farm Bureau challenge to the EPA TMDL program for the Chesapeake Bay. This upholds EPA efforts to improve water quality in the US water body most similar to the South Florida situation. [\[Law360\]](#) [\[Climate Progress\]](#) [\[Ruling Upheld\]](#) [\[SW FL Advocates\]](#)

## Discharge Permit for Fort Myers



The wastewater discharge permit for Fort Myers will expire in May, 2016. Cape Coral is challenging Ft Myers' renewal application in an effort to force the City to spend the money need to pipe the effluent to the Cape for reuse. Ft Myers could instead develop a reuse system of their own. [\[Letter\]](#) [\[NP Feb\]](#) [\[Gene Gibson\]](#) [\[NP Mar\]](#) [\[System Description\]](#)

## Clean-up a Success



On Mar 25 Riverwatch VP Mary Rawl hosted a clean-up of Billy's Creek with 47 people participating, mostly FGCU & FSW students. Thank you to all! Shout-out to Neil Wilkinson, Brian Murphy, John Paul, Wes Anderson & Chris Rawl for assisting and to CHNEP for funding. [\[Photo 1\]](#) [\[Photo 2\]](#) [\[Website\]](#) [\[Videos\]](#)

## Protesting Bad Water Management



Hundreds gathered on Saturday, February 13th at the Matanzas Pass Bridge to protest the discharge of Lake Okeechobee water into SW FL rivers and beaches. CRCA directors John Capece & Nargis Abduvohidova joined in. CRCA intern, Meryem Maidame was interviewed by News Press. [\[WINK\]](#) [\[Letters\]](#) [\[Photo\]](#) [\[Conservancy\]](#) [\[Video\]](#) [\[News-Press\]](#)

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## 2016-17 Board Elected



At its annual meeting on Mar 19, Riverwatch President John Paul conducted an election for the 2016-17 CRCA Board of Directors. 17 directors were elected with 4 positions to be filled later in the year by the board. Officers will be elected by directors at the April 6 board meeting. [\[2016-17 Board List\]](#)

## Annual Meeting Program



76 members & guests attended the Riverwatch annual meeting on Mar 19. The program included: Commissioner Frank Mann - MC, Wayne Daltry - Caloosahatchee History, John Cassani - Technical Issues, John Capece - Waterkeeper Program, Gene Gibson - Awards, and Amy Bennett Williams - Values. [\[Meeting Program\]](#) [\[Commissioner Frank Mann\]](#)

## River Fossils Collection



Attracting lots of attention at the Swamp Cabbage Festival was the fossil collection of Scott Perry, former Riverwatch President. Some of these Caloosahatchee River artifacts were collected by kids participating in Scott's summer fossil camp in which children learn about and hunt fossils [\[Fossil Camp Flyer\]](#) [\[Photo 1\]](#) [\[Photo 2\]](#) [\[Photo 3\]](#) [\[Photo 4\]](#) [\[Photo 5\]](#)

## Why We Care



Amy Bennett Williams read to the Riverwatch annual meeting an essay expressing the values that cause her to care about the Caloosahatchee. She also read a 1994 News Press editorial that led to the community forum where Riverwatch was born, an essay that also mentioned Waterkeeper. [\[A Day in the Caloosahatchee\]](#) [\[Amy Bennett Williams\]](#) [\[Essay Link\]](#)

## Sugarcane Grower Viewpoint



The sugar industry is presenting their side of the story regarding recent water problems saying their farmers do not discharge wastewater into Lake Okeechobee. It is true...sugar farms only pump/drain their excess water into canals. It is SFWMD that pumps water from canals into Lake O or elsewhere. [\[Tampa Tribune\]](#) [\[Huffington\]](#) [\[Sugar Ad\]](#) [\[Cleanwater\]](#) [\[Sanchez\]](#)

## Taking From The Public



Ft. Myers continues to strip residents of their riverfront public access rights. Riverwatch VP Gene Gibson sent a letter to DEP and the National Park Service reminding them of the public easement and the attempted violation. [\[CRCA Letter\]](#) [\[Cartoon\]](#)