
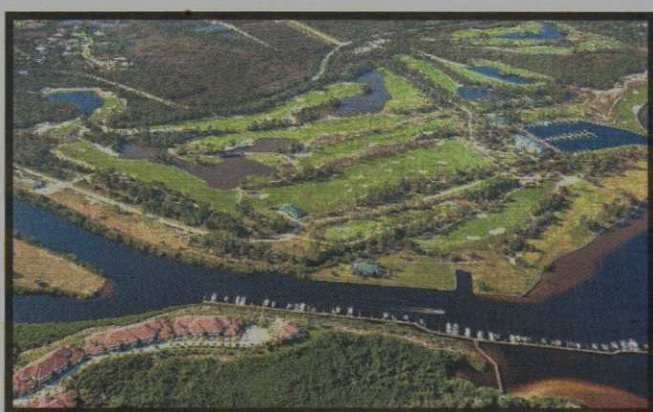


Help save our waterways

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EDITORIAL BOARD
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 Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers



Above: Aerial of the Floridian Golf and Yacht Club in 2012.

Right: Algae blooms in the St. Lucie River near Stuart in 2005.



Dear Mr. President:

We hope you are enjoying your visit to our little piece of paradise and have been able to take advantage of some of our precious natural beauty. You may have even gotten glimpses of our scenic St. Lucie River, though we hope none of your golf balls found their way there.

We care about that river and our other waterways. They are a part of our history, our lives and who we are. But we also believe that the St. Lucie, the Indian River Lagoon — known as North America's most diverse estuary, brimming as it does with birds and marine life — nearby Lake Okeechobee and the famous Everglades are national treasures as well.

But, Mr. President, we are concerned. We are concerned about what is happening to those treasures and fear they may be robbed from future generations. That would be an enormous loss — beyond imagination.

The fact is, though we have a passion for our environment and will do our part to protect and preserve it, we cannot accomplish that critical enterprise on our own. The federal government, which has the power and funding to do what we cannot and created many of the problems decades ago, has helped, but not enough to halt the pollution that threatens our waters. We must redirect the waters of Lake Okeechobee, and restore the Everglades, our river of grass, to the condition that made it one of America's great wildlife habitats.

So, we ask a favor. While we understand you have much on your mind — creating jobs, dealing with the national debt, education, gun violence, immigration, foreign threats — please find the time to get personally involved in efforts to preserve these waterways. Your commitment to investments in these efforts — from helping to fund already planned projects to advocating a plan and funding a flow-way south of Lake Okeechobee, then setting firm deadlines for completion — would help create and preserve jobs.

You could even hold a news conference along the St. Lucie or Indian River Lagoon, or at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, explaining the importance of preserving these natural resources and others. Invite congressmen Patrick Murphy and Tom Rooney, who represent a bipartisan front for ending devastating discharges from the lake into the St. Lucie. We know you care about the environment and appreciate your past efforts to fund projects and establish the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.

It is a lot to ask. But, you are the kind of president who thinks big. And, saving the local waterways and fixing the Everglades is a massive undertaking, not just for those of us who live here, but for generations to come from around the globe who want to experience, as you have to some extent this weekend, the beauty previous generations have preserved for us.

And, on a future vacation — and we hope you will visit with your family often — you will be able to look with pride at what your actions as president were able to accomplish as part of your legacy.

Sincerely,
Editorial Board
Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers