



SEPTEMBER, 2025

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CITRUS COUNTY,
FLORIDA

Vicky Iozzia is the Editor of this newsletter. Our mailing address is
LWVCC. P. O. Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460 Our website is
lwvcitrus.org

Our email address is LWVCC2013@gmail.com

Our September 10, 2025 meeting will feature Supervisor of Elections
Mo Baird. See the flyer on page 4.

Our October 8, 2025 meeting will feature the Yayas, a community group dedicated to helping homeless youth in Citrus County. See page 5.

Please visit our Facebook page and "like" us!

<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvotersofcitruscounty>

We want to thank the following businesses for their cooperation: FGE Printing, Glory Days Restaurant, Citrus County Chronicle, Pinnacle Printing

HAPPY SEPTEMBER EVERYONE!



SEPTEMBER
HOLIDAYS FOR
SOCIAL MEDIA

2025 Dates

- 01 Labor Day
- 07 National Grandparents Day
- 11 Patriot Day
- 13 International Chocolate Day
- 20 National Dance Day
- 22 Business Women's Day
- 22 First Day of Fall
- 28 Daughter's Day
- 22 Family Day
- 29 National Coffee Day
- 29 World Heart Day
- Healthy Aging Month
- Self-Care Awareness Month
- World Alzheimer's Month

Events in September 2025

Grid List Month Week Day September 2025 Go < Previous Today Next >

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting 4:00 pm: Citrus County School Board meeting	10 10:00 am: Supervisor of Elections Mo Baird – LWVCitrus General Meeting	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Calendar navigation: All Categories, Print

This calendar is from our website:

Lwvcitrus.org

**League of Women Voters
of Citrus County**
Guest Speaker, Maureen Baird

*Learn about the Upcoming ELECTIONS
and the new VOTING LAWS*

Coastal Region Library

Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 10:00 am



**WHAT'S
NEW?**



**Maureen "Mo" Baird
Supervisor of Elections**

Citrus County Supervisor of Elections, "Mo" Baird will give a presentation on the changes in the voting laws that will affect the 2025 and 2026 Primaries.

There will be a Q&A session after her presentation. Protect your right to vote by learning about the new election laws.

**Coastal Region Library
8619 W Crystal, Crystal River, 34428**

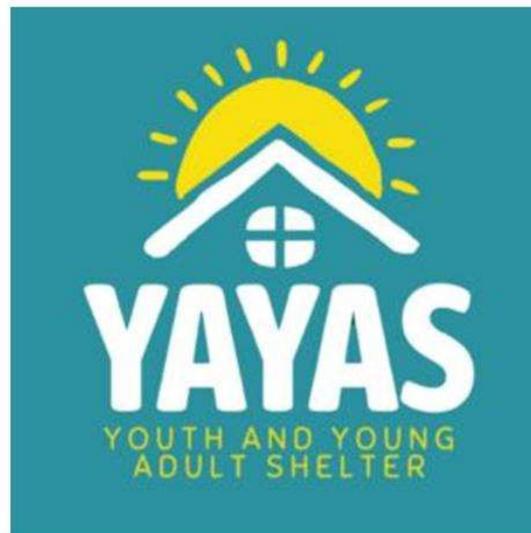
The Public is Invited: For more information please call 352-613-5056 or email lwwcc2013@gmail.com. Visit lwwcitrus.org and Face book page "League of Women Voters of Citrus County".

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

League of Women Voters of Citrus County

When: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 at 10:00 AM

**Where: Coastal Region Library
8619 W Crystal St. Crystal River, Fl. 34428**



What happens to a high school graduate when he or she is told they now must leave home? Where does a teen live when his parents are incarcerated? Who will support a student who has aged out of foster care? This is not a common, everyday topic. However, it needs to be addressed.

Nichelle Mohre-Cassidy is the Executive Director of YaYAS, the Youth and Young Adult Shelter Ms. Mohre-Cassidy will be the guest speaker at the League of Women Voters of Citrus County, October 8, at 10:00 am. She will give a presentation on the organization, their goals, and their concerns.

The LWVCC will be having a collection for those who wish to donate in the form of cash or checks made out to: YaYAs.

Public is Invited

For more information call 352-613-5056

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

September meeting, Mo Baird	Page 4
October meeting, the YaYas	Page 5
Linda Albels, Membership Chair	Page 7
Girl Scouts Presentation	Page 8 to 11
Zoom with Commissioner Diana Finegan	Page 12
What can you find on the BOCC website?	Page 13
Getting involved	Page 14
County meetings	Page 15
Member Survey	Page 16
Cattle Dog Socials	Pages 17
SOE Mo Baird – Vote by Mail	Page 18
From the LWV Impact on Issues- Taking Action	Page 19
Peg Primeau, Reproductive Rights Chair.	Pages 20 to 21
Rosemary Nilles, Gun violence, legislative update	Pages 21 to 22
In the News	Pages 23 to 25
From the Department of Health	Page 26 to 28
Maxine Conner, Natural Resources Chair	Pages 29 to 36
Jan Hall, from our photo archives	Page 37
From the LWV of Florida	Page 38
From National League of Women Voters	Page 39



Linda Abels, Membership Chair

Hello Fall! I hope you all had a wonderful summer. Please welcome new members **Richard Motley** who joined in August and **Phyllis Dixon** who joined in June.

We now have a total of 68 members. We have grown over the last year and hope to continue to grow over the next year. If you know of someone that may be interested, please suggest they come to a meeting. We have some great speakers coming up as well as our annual holiday gathering.

Have a Great Month and see you at our next meeting.

Linda



**Vicky Iozzia, 1st President, Newsletter Editor,
Webmaster, Speakers Bureau Chair**

Hello everyone! There is so much I want to write about. I want to tell you about my trip to New York this summer, looking back many decades. I want to tell you about my recent bout with Covid. That will have to wait.

First, let me tell you what your League has been up to since the last newsletter:



Heather Wolfertz and her daughter Jessica

On **Wednesday, July 9, 2025**, our League hosted the **Girl Scouts**. What does that have to do with the League of Women Voters, you might ask?

As Peg Primeau wrote, “Both groups promote the well-being of girls and women in society. Both groups promote full civic participation for all. Both groups are committed to nonpartisan education about democratic principles and action.”

The Girl Scout/League of Women Voters Collaboration Guide says, “Girl Scouts bring their dreams to life and work together to build a better world. Through programs from coast to coast, Girl Scouts of all backgrounds and abilities can be unapologetically themselves as they discover their strengths and rise to meet new challenges— whether they want to climb to the top of a tree or the top of their class, lace up their boots for a hike or advocate for climate justice, or make their first best friends. Backed by adult volunteers, mentors, and millions of alums, Girl Scouts lead the way as they find their voices.”

I was not a Girl Scout. I admit I didn't know much about what they do. When the presentation was over I was very sad. I was sad because now I can see what I missed.

The presentation was delivered by Heather Wolfertz and her daughter Jessica. They did an excellent job describing what they do, with a great powerpoint presentation, specific examples, and interesting and effective delivery.

Citrus County



Quick Facts on Citrus County Girls

21%

of girls experience physical abuse in their household.

16%

of girls experience sexual abuse.

55%

of girls experience physical bullying by peers.

81%

of girls experience emotional or social bullying by peers.

27%

of female students have skipped school at least once due to bullying.

66%

of girls experienced symptoms of depression in the last year.

46%

of high school girls have drank alcohol.

42%

of high school girls vape nicotine.

**Citrus
Opportunity
Achievement
Knowledge
Success**

THE WORK OF TODAY
IS THE HISTORY
OF TOMORROW,
AND WE
ARE ITS MAKERS.

JANETTE GORDON LOW

I found the following facts on Citrus County girls below eye-opening.

The program has well defined goals and outcomes:

Long-lasting Outcomes!

Girl Scouts' Five Outcomes
Girl Scouts' **Five Outcomes** describe what girls gain as a result of their Girl Scout experience and are signs that let us see we are delivering on our mission. Checking the five outcomes is like noting road signs on a journey - the signs let you know you're on the right path to your destination.

Seeing the age-appropriate signs during Girl Scout activities lets adults know that girls are achieving the intended outcomes.

Activities and events grounded in these five outcomes result in our overall goals of girls leading with **Courage, Confidence and Character**.

- **SENSE OF SELF:**
Girls have confidence in themselves and their abilities, and form positive identities.
- **POSITIVE VALUES:**
Girls act ethically, honestly, and responsibly, and show concern for others.
- **CHALLENGE SEEKING:**
Girls learn to take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from mistakes.
- **COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING:**
Girls desire to contribute to the world in purposeful and meaningful ways, learn how to identify problems in the community, and create "action plans" to solve them.
- **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS:**
Girls develop and maintain healthy relationships by communicating their feelings directly and resolving conflicts constructively.


Citrus
Opportunity
Achievement
Knowledge
Success

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AND WE
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AAETIE GORDON LOW

The system of earned badges was explained, including democracy badges:

Democracy Badges



Democracy
for Daisies



Democracy
for Brownies



Democracy
for Juniors



Democracy
for Cadettes



Democracy
for Seniors



Democracy
for Ambassadors

One slide showed famous American women who were Girl Scouts:



The video of the presentation is available on youtube at:
https://youtu.be/efgn5l2_ghc



Board of County Commissioners Diana Finegan

On **Wednesday, August 6**, we had our third Zoom meeting. These meetings are designed to provide information to our members regarding local issues. They are at 7:00 PM for those who can't make it to our meetings during the day. So far we have had Rebecca Bays, Holly Davis, and our latest was Diana Finegan as guests.

Diana is a native of Floral City. She was the youngest director of a domestic violence center in Florida, CASA. She discussed her efforts to manage tax dollars and reduce the budget. Diana expressed her belief in the importance of allowing public input at all budget hearings, and she presented detailed budget information and questions to department heads. She also voted against a 21% budget increase from two years ago and calculated that the proposed budget would result in a \$64 million increase in taxes over six years, urging department heads to justify their expenses.

The topics addressed are as follows: challenges with septic to sewer conversion, water management, managing density and growth in the county, homelessness, and water and aquifer concerns.

In addition, Diana walked us through the information available on the BOCC website. There is a tremendous amount of information on the website, and we will be exploring it and sharing what we learned.

You can see this zoom meeting on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLqunB1LkEI&t=2764s>

What's on the BOCC website?

At our August 6 zoom with Diana Finegan, Diana showed us some of the information available on the BOCC website. Maxine Connor and I got together and looked for the information listed below. If there is additional information you would like to know about, contact us at lwwcc2013@gmail.com

Bocc website information

<https://www.citrusbocc.com/index.php>

look what's coming (development projects)

https://citrusbocc.com/news_detail_T12_R2136.php

you can subscribe to a monthly update of what's coming by emailing Joanna Coutu:

Joanna.coutu@citrusbocc.com

Boat ramps

https://www.citrusbocc.com/departments/community_services/boat_ramps/index.php

How to find out who your commissioner is

<https://maps.citrusbocc.com/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e26c237431af4f778944d45af18b5b52>

to search for properties by address or owner: property appraiser

<https://www.citruspa.org/web/search/commonsearch.aspx?mode=owner>

how to get agenda for county meetings

<https://citrusclerk.portal.civicclerk.com/>

Click on movie camera icon to see video of meeting

5 year planning meeting video

<https://citrusclerk.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8870/media>

road network pavement management

https://www.citrusbocc.com/departments/public_works/engineering/project_management_section/road_network_pavement_management.php

small county outreach program projects (SCOP)

https://www.citrusbocc.com/departments/public_works/engineering/project_management_section/small_county_outreach_program_projects.php

To find out about individual properties go to:

https://www.citrusbocc.com/departments/systems_management/gis/index.php

and click on GIS Division website

If you have not heard me say or write it before, **We Need Your Help.**

I am proud of what our Board and members have been doing, but there are many more things we can do. Below are the areas where we need volunteers:

Fund raiser – to develop a plan to raise money for our League and implement it, recruiting other volunteers to help you.

Historian – keep scrapbook of League activities by updating scrapbook. (Vicky made first scrapbook)

Voter services chair – represent us at Florida League monthly zoom meetings.
Arrange for community outreach to register voters.
Recruit people to participate in these outreaches.
Goodwill.

Tech person – to record general monthly meetings, edit, and put on youtube.
Vicky can brief person interested.

Publicity – make fliers for newsletter and publicity for meetings.
- Contact appropriate newspapers three months in advance to publicize League activities. – Jan will supply all information to do this

People to attend community meetings – Attend Board of County Commissioners, Library Board, and School Board meetings.

I am sure that many of you are thinking, “What can I do to help?” The present political situation can make us feel helpless, but we will not let that happen. Working together as League members, we can make a difference.

If you have any questions, send us an email at lwvcc2013@gmail.com

County Meetings

YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

■ District 1 (Crystal River, Ozello, Citronelle, Red Level): Jeff Kinnard, jeff.kinnard@citrusbocc.com

■ District 2 (Homosassa, Sugarmill Woods): Diana Finegan, diana.finegan@citrusbocc.com

■ District 3 (Beverly Hills, Pine Ridge, Citrus Springs): Janet Barek, janet.barek@citrusbocc.com

■ District 4 (Floral City, part of Inverness): Rebecca Bays, rebecca.bays@citrusbocc.com

■ District 5 (part of Inverness, Hernando, Arrowhead): Holly L. Davis, holly.davis@citrusbocc.com

NOTE: Correspondences, including email, are public records once received by commissioners or county staff.

Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

1:00 PM 2nd & 4th Tuesdays:

Aug. 12, Aug. 26, Sept. 9, Sept. 23, Oct. 7, Oct. 28

Citrus County Courthouse, 110 Apopka Ave. Inverness

Agenda & watch meetings online:

Citrus County BOCC/Departments/Commissioners

Meetings are livestreamed on the Citrus County Government

You Tube Channel.

Broadcast live: Comcast - Channel 71, Spectrum - Channel

643

Find all county meeting dates:

<https://citrusclerk.org/calendar.aspx>

Citrus County Library Advisory Board

9:00 AM, 4th Tuesdays: June 24, Aug. 26, Oct. 28

Lecanto Gov't Bldg., 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto 34461

For more information:

Citrus County/BOCC/Special Library Board

<https://citrusclerk.org/calendar.aspx>

Citrus County Schools District (CCSD) School Board

4:00 PM, 2nd Tuesdays, Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14

1007 Main St. Inverness 34450

Agenda & watch meetings online:

Citrus County School District/School Board tab/ Board Agenda

and Minutes:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/citrus/Board.nsf/Public>

View School Board Meetings:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CitrusSchools>

Member survey

Below is a survey which will help us to get our members involved in the League. You can print it from the newsletter, or Vicky will have copies at all coming events.



League of Women Voters of Citrus County (LWVCC)
GETTING TO KNOW YOU! GETTING TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU!!

Date: _____
First Name: _____ MI: _____ Last Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Additional Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____
E-Mail: _____

I would like to contribute my expertise in the following area(s):

- Lead: Vicky Iozzia Website Monthly Newsletter Speakers Bureau Technology
- Lead: Maxine Connor Natural Resources and Environment
- Lead: Linda Abels & Devora Stager Membership ChapterSpot *[official portal to view, update, join, and renew memberships]*
- Lead: Peg Primeau Attend County Meetings *[Community Watch]* Reproductive Rights
- Lead: Jan Hall & Dr BJ Ezell FL Dept of Health Citrus County
- Lead: Jan Hall Events Planning Flyers
- Lead: Rosemary Nilles Education Gun Safety Tabling at Community Events Legislation Federal & State
- Lead: Jan Publicity Historian

General Interests: Educational Public Relations Planning Financial Management Legal
 Government Fundraising Marketing Webmaster Administration/Business Management
 Other: _____

I am willing to help with Fundraising:
 Secure resources (teams and/or people) for events Secure event sponsorships
 Recruit friends to attend events and other donor cultivation initiatives.

Signature: _____

Please complete and submit to: Vicky Iozzia, vickyiozzia@gmail.com

Contact: LWVCC, P. O. Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460 **Website:** <http://lwvcitrus.org>

Please let us know, your talents, your passions, what you would like to do to participate in this democracy we all love. We are interested!



**League of Women Voters Social
atCattle Dog Restaurant in
Inverness,July 30, 2025**

August 27 meeting

Our next meeting is at the Cattle Dog Restaurant
in Inverness, 4:00, **Wednesday, Sept.17**



VOTE-BY-MAIL REQUESTS HAVE EXPIRED

FLORIDA STATUTE §101.62(1)a

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: Supervisor of Elections, Maureen "Mo" Baird, reminds voters that Vote-by-Mail requests expire on December 31st after each election cycle.

To receive a Vote-by-Mail ballot for the 2025-2026 election cycle, you must request a ballot.



If you have not already requested a Vote-by-Mail ballot after January 1, 2025, you may do so today by scanning the QR code below.



Or visit the Supervisor of Elections website at www.votecitrus.gov and select "Request a Vote by Mail Ballot" under the "Vote by Mail" tab.

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS: Maureen "Mo" Baird

ELECTIONS OFFICE: The Supervisor of Elections Office is located at 1500 N. Meadowcrest Blvd, Crystal River, in the West Citrus Government Center.

QUESTIONS: Call 352-564-7120.

50107267

From the new League of Women Voters Impact on Issues,
2024 to 2026

TAKING ACTION

Working Together to Influence Public Policy

In the League, we tend to focus our efforts on influencing policy measures in the executive branch, including federal agencies and the White House, the US Congress, and state and local legislative or administrative bodies, by preparing testimony, lobbying legislators, and initiating advocacy campaigns on issues of interest to our members. We also file and intervene in lawsuits, file "friend of the court" or amicus curiae briefs in court cases, and monitor and comment when regulations are being written for executive branch agencies. The following guidelines apply to all these activities.

General Guidelines

This section is organized with general guidelines for action, followed by the role of the national office and staff in advocacy, then how to use Impact on Issues to take action at the state and local levels, and finally how state and local Leagues can request permission to take national action on non-priority federal issues.

The goal is to work collaboratively among the levels of League with consistent messages and strategies to ensure we are speaking with one voice. Effective advocacy efforts on national issues depend on a partnership at all League levels — lobbying in Washington and constituent lobbying at home. This one-two punch reinforces the League's impact in influencing national and state legislation.

Nonpartisanship

The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

Working Together to Influence Public Policy

The process used in formulating positions and acting at the grassroots level makes the League unique and sets the League apart from other organizations. The fact that we are members of not only a local League, but a state League and the League of Women Voters of the United States, makes us a powerful force.

State and Local Action Using Impact on Issues

Using National Positions at the Regional, State, and Local Levels

Both the Principles (broad statements of beliefs) and Positions (specific statements and guidelines) can be used at the state and local levels to develop support for actions taken at those levels. Impact on Issues, while often citing the federal level of government, is also designed as a guide to encourage state and local Leagues to develop plans for acting at the community level.



Peg Primeau, 2nd President, Reproductive Rights Chair

Mother's Friend

Here are excerpts from “Mother’s Friend: Birth Control in Nineteenth-Century America” by Lauren MacIvor Thompson, PhD (2017)

At first, the phrase “nineteenth-century birth control” may seem like an oxymoron. After all, “the Pill” wasn’t approved for use in the United States until 1960. And even then, it was still illegal. It’s only in the past thirty years or so that American women and their partners have such a wide choice in safe, legal contraceptive technologies.

But as the present controversies over reproductive technology show no sign of abating, it’s worth taking a look back to see where we’ve come from.

In 1800, the birth rate in the United States was the highest in the world, with the average woman bearing eight children. But by the end of the nineteenth century, women were bearing, on average, only three. As birth control historian Linda Gordon has observed, this drop in family size occurred despite the fact that state legislatures beginning in the 1840s banned the sale and use of contraceptives (culminating in the federal ban via the Comstock Law of 1873), and that abortion was criminalized in every state by 1880.

Americans used the same methods known for centuries throughout the early modern world to prevent pregnancy. These, of course, included the ancient methods of coitus interruptus—or withdrawal, and the rhythm method.

But there was also an active nineteenth-century market for birth control devices, including vaginal suppositories or pessaries (which physically blocked the cervix), syringes sold with

acidic solutions for douching, and antiseptic spermicides. Condoms were also relatively popular, especially after mid-century when new techniques made it easier to manufacture rubber and their price dropped significantly. The contraceptive market advertised these devices both openly and with coded language, using phrases like “female tonic,” “prevention powders,” and my personal favorite — “Mother’s friend.”

Abortion was legal in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries until the moment of “quickening,” when the pregnant woman could feel fetal movement. The most common means included the woman’s ingestion of abortifacient drugs, as well as abortions performed with surgical instruments by trained practitioners. While exact statistics are difficult to calculate, we do know that abortion rates rose steadily between 1830-1860, to one in five pregnancies.



Rosemary Nilles, 1st Vice President, Gun Safety Chair, Education Chair

Florida education: Winners, losers and casualties

Schools are open, and students are back in class after a tumultuous summer for school officials. How does one describe the aftermath of one of the most difficult budget ordeals ever in Florida education? What exactly happened? Words like battle, game, even disaster come to mind.

Our Florida schools have survived and are moving forward despite the drama. League of Women Voters of Citrus County (LWVCC) is a longtime supporter of public education as foundational to a democratic society. We



regularly write columns about education, and have never used words like winners, losers and casualties.

And yet, in 2025, they seem fitting.

Florida lawmakers, weeks beyond their deadline, finally passed

a budget in June, which Gov. DeSantis signed into law.

Meanwhile, federal money – already allocated – was withheld. Weeks later, it was suddenly released.

For months, school districts couldn't count on needed funds.

Who were the winners, losers and casualties of the battles of the budget?

Winners in the budget battles

■ **Vouchers:** In the name of Parental Choice, Florida continues to move towards privatizing education at taxpayer expense. The 2025 budget offered hefty increases to voucher funding for families to use for home and private education – without accountability.

■ **Charter schools:** “Schools of Hope” were originally created to serve children in areas with persistently low-performing public schools. A last-minute budget agreement expanded that definition, and allows these charter schools to co-locate, rent free, in public schools with available space. This puts these charter schools – many managed by for-profit, out-of-state companies – in direct competition with struggling traditional schools.

See EDUCATION, page C3

EDUCATION

From page C1

■ **Secondary programs:** Popular programs like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment and Career Technical Education had faced drastic cuts by Florida lawmakers. A huge public outcry helped to restore these funds – but only for 2025. A new funding mechanism will make it easier to cut budgets with less public awareness, so more funding fights loom ahead.

Losers in the budget battles

■ **Taxpayers:** Vouchers for private and home education are taxpayer funded, yet lack accountability or transparency. Nearly one in four dollars allocated to education goes to vouchers.

■ **Teachers:** Despite the governor's claims of record funding for teacher pay, Florida teachers are losing the fight against inflation. This year's raises result in net gains of \$18-\$20 per paycheck for most teachers. Florida remains 50th among states for teacher pay.

■ **Families with young children:** Florida lawmakers cut funding for early learning programs by 5.7 percent – just as more families than ever rely on this support.

■ **School districts:** Strapped for years by insufficient state funding, administrators and school boards struggle to make cuts that don't impact student learning. Increases to school funding are insufficient to cover rising costs, including insurance. The Base Student Allocation increased by only \$41.62. This 0.8 percent increase doesn't keep pace with inflation or student needs.

■ **Add to that federal government's** cruel political game of withholding promised funds. How can school districts plan when the money disappears and then reappears? With looming federal cuts for 2026, how will students be served?

Students are the casualties of the budget battles!

When politicians and policy makers value profits and political points over an equitable system of

public schools, kids and families suffer the most. When funds are pulled away from traditional public schools to fund private and for-profit charter schools, fewer dollars are left to fund programs to support struggling students and schools.

Our lawmakers must heed the words of Florida's Constitution: “The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida ... Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education ...”

The League of Women Voters stands firmly by that promise of a well-funded, fair, accountable system for all Florida's children.

This column is part of a series on education from LWV Citrus. Data sources include Florida Policy Institute (www.floridapolicy.org) and Families for Strong Public Schools (<https://strongflschools.com>). League of Women Voters remains nonpartisan, never endorsing or opposing political parties or candidates. We develop positions on issues only after careful study and consensus. Find us at www.lwvcitrus.org or www.lwvfl.org.

IN THE NEWS

Trump is wildly unpopular and losing ground fast. Why is anyone afraid of him? |

Opinion

Trump's approval rating in the YouGov polling has tumbled from +3% at the beginning of February to -15% now. He's underwater on every issue Americans care about.



Rex Huppke

USA TODAY August 20, 2025

While the [top issues for most Americans are high prices](#), inflation and health care, our increasingly unpopular president is laser-focused on things nobody cares about. Like downplaying exhibitions on the [history of slavery at the Smithsonian](#).

On the same day a new poll by The Economist/YouGov showed Donald [Trump's disapproval rating hitting a new high](#), the president took time to [post this on social media](#): "The Smithsonian is OUT OF CONTROL, where everything discussed is how horrible our Country is, how bad Slavery was, and how unaccomplished the downtrodden have been."

From Jeanne Messersmith.

FREE WASHINGTON, D.C.!

Recently, Citrus County resident Megan Carella sent out the following message to friends and family:

"I'm writing this in rage, and to ask for your activism. My 4-year-old granddaughter is in a Spanish

immersion summer camp in Washington, DC, where my son and his family live. My son and daughter-in-

law got an email from the school telling them that ICE agents have been spotted outside the building,

along with several unmarked SUVs. Because, you know, we've gotta keep the world safe from pre-

schoolers learning a foreign language. They've asked us to spread the word about the group named

freedcproject.org which helps you send letters to our elected officials protesting the Federal Government's invasion of DC. If you would, please go to the site and send letters to our Senators and

Gus. Here's a link: <https://freedcproject.org/allies> Thank you! Megan"

The Guardian, August 16, 2025

'State-driven censorship': new wave of book bans hits Florida school districts
Hundreds of titles are being pulled from library and classroom shelves in the Republican-dominated state

Book bans have been rising at a rapid rate across the US since 2021, but this latest wave comes after increased pressure from the state board of education in Florida.

The board issued a harsh warning to the Hillsborough county school district in May, saying that if they didn't remove "pornographic" titles from their library, formal legal action could ensue. More than 600 books were pulled as a result, and the process was expected to cost the district \$350,000.

The books taken off the school shelves included The Diary of Anne Frank and What Girls Are Made of by Elana K Arnold. None of them were under formal review by the district, and they hadn't been flagged by local parents as potentially inappropriate. Parents with children in the school system even had the opportunity to opt their children out of a particular reading, without removing them from the class for everyone.

PEN called the board of education's mass removal in Hillsborough county a "state-driven censorship", and concluded "it is a calculated effort to consolidate power through fear, to bypass legal precedent, and to silence diverse voices in Florida's public schools," in their press release.

Fearing similar retribution, nine surrounding school districts have taken proactive measures, pulling books which they are worried could cause similar controversy. This includes Columbia, Escambia, Orange and Osceola, who have followed suit and quietly complied, probably to avoid similar state retaliation.

Just how much has DOGE exaggerated its numbers? Now we have receipts.

A POLITICO analysis of DOGE data reveals the organization saved less than 5 percent of its claimed savings from nearly 10,100 contract terminations.

8/12/25 DOGE's savings calculations are based on faulty math. The group uses the maximum spending possible under each contract as its baseline — meaning all money an agency could spend in future fiscal years. That amount can far exceed what the government has actually committed to pay out.

Counting this “ceiling value” gives a false picture of savings for taxpayers.

“That’s the equivalent of basically taking out a credit card with a \$20,000 credit limit, canceling it and then saying, ‘I’ve just saved \$20,000,’” said Jessica Tillipman, associate dean for government procurement law studies at George Washington University Law School. “Anything that’s been said publicly about [DOGE’s] savings is meaningless.”

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Florida Department of Health in Citrus County

Diabetes Empowerment Education Program

We can help YOU take CONTROL of your diabetes!

FREE 8-week workshop series



What You'll Learn:

- Improve your quality of life
- Prevent complications
- Learn mindful choices for proper nutrition
- Enhance physical activity
- Strengthen personal support systems
- Build relationships with health care providers

September 17 - December 3
Class meets every Wednesday
10 a.m. to noon

Langley Health Services
595 N Lecanto Highway
Lecanto, FL 34461



Registration is Required

For more information, contact:

Kathryn Defranco

Kathryn.Defranco@FLhealth.gov

Mark Pagan

Mark.Pagan@FLhealth.gov



Scan here to register.

Citrus.FloridaHealth.gov



DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP



Support:

Do you or someone you know have diabetes? Join our free monthly diabetes support group that is open to all! Led by Certified Diabetes Educators and Health Educators from the Citrus county Department of Health.



Learn:

Each group focuses on a different diabetes topic with the opportunity to learn, share, get questions answered, and receive small giveaways. There will also be small recipe tastings, as well as guest speakers every other month.

Please RSVP here



When & Where

- 3rd Tuesday of every month starting July 2023
- Time: 9am to 10am
- IFAS Conference Room
- 3650 W. Sovereign Path
Lecanto, FL 34461

For more information contact:

Kathryn DeFranco or
kathryn.defranco@flhealth.gov
352-513-8085

Mark Pagan
Mark.pagan@flhealth.gov
352-513-8071

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN CITRUS COUNTY
PRESENTS

11TH ANNUAL SAVE A HEART



WORLD HEART DAY
SEPT. 20, 2025
RACE STARTS AT 9 A.M.

Whispering Pines Park
1700 Forest Drive, Inverness, FL 34453
Swag bags, T-Shirts, and Medals*
while supplies last

In-person meet up and bib pick up at Whispering Pines Pavilion
Virtual Race Dates: September 15 - 20, 2025



SCAN HERE, FREE REGISTRATION

Registration closes September 15, 2025. Registration link:
<https://runsignup.com/Race/FL/inverness/SaveAHeart5KCitrus>
Check registration link for swag bag pickup dates.



More Info: Kathryn.Defranco@FLhealth.gov OR Carmen.Hernandez@FLhealth.gov



Maxine Connor, Natural Resources Chair

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FROM LWVCC NATURAL RESOURCES CHAIR
SEPTEMBER, 2025**

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE SAND MINE CPA/AA/PUD-2025-00001 – Atty Darryl W. Johnston for George L. Southworth, Trustee, of the George L. Southworth Revocable Trust dated 2/17/06

A special master hearing is required for mining operations. On June 27, 2025 the Special Master Christian Waugh denied the application because it did not meet the requirements of the comprehensive plan. The comp plan requires that the site had to be “put back to the same thing that existed before.” The one sworn expert witness for the applicant, Brooksville geologist George Foster, was asked if the site could be put back the same way. He responded “No, it was going to be a lake.”

This matter was then scheduled to come before the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners at the Inverness Courthouse on August 12, 2025 at 5:01 pm for transmittal to the state. It would then have been scheduled for final approval by the BOCC at a later date.

https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/special-master-rules-against-sand-mine-application-the-matter-will-go-twice-before-citrus-county/article_44eafacc-f238-5c04-b2a3-dc6acaa3c2d1.html

The item was pulled from the agenda. Click on the link below to see the document dated 7/31/25 which shows that the Florida Department of Transportation has taken land and settled with George Southworth. This document showing the taking of the property in question on July 31st by Florida Department of Transportation was posted on Facebook by Citrus Insider. The posting on August 25 states that “Southworth settled his eminent domain proceedings with the state...”

Click on the link to read the rest of the comments.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=122172452786538075&set=a.122162996816538075>

Here is the article on the proposed Sand Mine, with all of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group’s concerns, used with permission of the Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group and Colleen Farmer. It appeared in the July Newsletter article from the LWV of Citrus County’s Natural Resources Chair: <https://www.lwvcitrus.org/lwvcc-monthly-newsletter/>

Citrus County Sand Mine Proposed

Stop the Sand Mine



Image compliments of Colleen Farmer

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group has concerns regarding an application to mine for sand on 336 acres of land in the Pine Ridge community of Crystal River. It was filed by George Southworth, Trustee, and Citrus County held a special master hearing on June 27th on the request to change the land use designation from agricultural to extractive. Since this is a large-scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment, it will also be forwarded to state agencies for review and permitting. It may be scheduled for hearing before the Citrus County Commission in July or August.

One side of the parcel abuts the Pine Ridge residential area and a bridle path for horseback riding with rural acreage farmlands on other sides. The land has scattered wetlands onsite and a biological survey found gopher tortoises and Shermans fox squirrels, which the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission must address, if approved. The Species Inventory Report notes "According to Florida Land Cover Classification System, over 80% of the property is a sandhill, currently used for Pine production onsite. The property as a whole is a fairly intact example of the native Florida sandhill habitat type as well as the minor component of emergent and forested wetlands." Yet the applicant claims the land has been "cleared".

The neighbors have organized to oppose the project and launched a petition drive that states: *"Please let's encourage our Citrus County Board to look more closely at the requested land use change from AGR to EXT as it does not align with the overall comprehensive plan for our area. It is the water and our beautiful Springs that drive the economy in this area."* There are 10 private residential wells within 1,000 feet of the proposed mine. See petition at: <https://stopthesandminecc.wixsite.com/stopthesandmine/english-privacy-policy>

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group submitted comments on the application and Citrus Conservation Committee Member Robin Orlandi attended the hearing and asked that it be denied. Multiple inconsistencies within the application create an unreliable and contradictory narrative. These include assertions in the Petitioner's Narrative, the Land Development Code Amendment Application, and Application Summary that conflict with the findings of the Geotechnical Summary, Hydrological Summary, Groundwater Mitigation Plan and Listed Species Survey reports.

For example, the application fails to assess potential impacts to the aquifer and "Outstanding Florida Springs" complex at Crystal River by denying that here is a surficial aquifer on the project as indicated in the hydrogeological survey. The proposed mining site is within the "Springs Priority Focus Area" (PFA) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FL-DEP) Basin Management Action Plan for Crystal River/Kings Bay. A PFA is "where the Floridan aquifer is generally most vulnerable to pollutant inputs and there is a known connectivity between ground water pathways and an outstanding Florida spring."

In addition, the application states, "Sand will be extracted below the water table of the surficial aquifer. The clay aquitard below the surficial aquifer and above the Floridan aquifer will not be breached." The Geotechnical Summary, Hydrological Summary, and Groundwater Mitigation Plan contradicts this narrative stating that the two aquifers "may be separated by the low permeability clays, though usually they are in direct hydraulic communications because the clays are discontinuous." Description of core samples taken on site confirm, "that in some cases sand was underlain with dolomitic limestone (with no intervening clay)."

The hydrological plan identifies the direction of groundwater flow as southwest, towards the First Magnitude Crystal River/Kings Bay springs. The potential for contamination from the mine is likely. The application asserts that all site drainage will be

contained within the mine pit but does not address the pit capacity nor calculate potential volume of drainage from dewatering of excavated materials, storms, seasonal high water table flooding, or unexpected flow from surficial aquifer, likely connected to the Floridan aquifer.

Conversely, potential impacts of site drainage are overlooked. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Crystal River Unincorporated Watershed Study indicates the site is within multiple 100-year, 24-hour floodplains. The applicant's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan states that "no dewatering will be conducted." SWFWMD replied that "It appears that dewatering may be required during the construction activities... Please submit a dewatering plan." The SWFWMD Request for Additional Information noted, "Since the project is located in a sensitive karst area and a historic sinkhole is located onsite, please provide a detail for an emergency chimney sink repair should one occur in a pond." Runoff into the mine pit and likely draining to groundwater increases water quality risks to the King's Bay springs and the aquifer.

Declining water quality in Florida springs due to surficial contamination is a statewide concern. This proposed sand mine undermines years of community efforts to improve water quality, protect the area's marine life, support the local economy of fishing, aquaculture and recreational tourism, and the quality of life and property values of residents. To risk harming impaired springs to mine for construction sand is unjustified, particularly when other active, open pit mineral mines already exist within Citrus and adjacent counties.

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE FERTILIZER ORDINANCE

On July 29, the Citrus BOCC had the fertilizer ordinance on their agenda to discuss. Michael McGrath, Lead Organizer of Sierra Club Florida was invited by BOCC Chair Rebecca Bays to give a PowerPoint presentation on improving our existing fertilizer ordinance to add a rainy season ban on nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) fertilizers and other items to protect our local springs, rivers, aquifer, and Gulf from nutrient pollution. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's newly published Basin Management Action Plans (recovery strategies) for our local springs show inordinate amounts of nitrogen pollution from various inputs, turf fertilizer being one of them. The commissioners voted 4 to 1 (with Commissioner Barek dissenting) to move the item forward. The county attorney is to draw up a new ordinance to include the changes made in the motion. It will come up on a future agenda for approval by the commissioners.

The proposed ordinance would:

- Add a rainy season ban on nitrogen (N) and phosphorous (P) fertilizer from June 1 through September 30. (In the current fertilizer ordinance there is already a dormant season ban on N fertilizer from November through March.)
- Require at least 65% of applied nitrogen to be slow-release.
- Cap total annual nitrogen use at 4 pounds per 1,000 square feet.
- Maintain the existing 25-foot fertilizer-free buffer zones near waterways and wetlands.
- Remove the certified applicator exemption.

https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/rainy-season-fertilizer-ban-advances-in-citrus-county/article_08da00ab-73b3-5667-a04c-

[b8e898c79870.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawMcTFxleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFnMGExcnVHUVFMTEdYeXZYAR6D4TrZnVZDcIJZnyvCk-eAU64wYupVIUaEyD0qk7NCWxwXmZDXAmMlauGubQ_aem_Wh5u69sm1FGBcz35DfsEbQ](https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/rainy-season-fertilizer-ban-advances-in-citrus-county/article_08da00ab-73b3-5667-a04c-b8e898c79870.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawMcTFxleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFnMGExcnVHUVFMTEdYeXZYAR6D4TrZnVZDcIJZnyvCk-eAU64wYupVIUaEyD0qk7NCWxwXmZDXAmMlauGubQ_aem_Wh5u69sm1FGBcz35DfsEbQ)

<https://www.facebook.com/floridaspringscouncil/posts/the-citrus-county-commission-voted-on-july-29-to-draft-a-strong-rainy-season-fer/1067344142232933/>

https://www.paxtonmedia.com/news/citrus_county_chronicle/fertilizer-ordinance-draws-more-debate/article_a942685f-626f-5e60-82d8-f6edbc1080d0.html

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE ASKING THAT THE COUNTY STRENGTHEN THE FERTILIZER ORDINANCE

Strengthen the fertilizer ordinance

- **Apr 22, 2025**

Citrus County's springs and rivers are more than just beautiful — they're the backbone of our local economy, a big reason so many of us chose to live and retire here, and why so many more come to visit. Our aim is to protect that legacy.

The County Commission has the opportunity to strengthen its existing fertilizer ordinance by adding a strict rainy season ban. This isn't a radical idea. Over 100 Florida communities have already passed similar rainy season application restrictions. They work. Alternatives like iron-rich, "summer-safe" products keep lawns green without polluting our precious water resources. Landscapers and residents alike adapt quickly once they know the rules — and education, not heavy-handed enforcement, is the key. We've seen it work across the state. It has become apparent that this isn't about government overreach or micromanaging anyone's lawn — it's about protecting what makes Citrus County special, in a way that's smart, affordable, and proven to work. Fertilizing in the rainy season is a waste. Heavy summer rains don't feed your lawn — they wash fertilizer into our waterways, where excess nitrogen and phosphorus trigger toxic algae blooms, choke out sea grasses and kill wildlife. One bad algae outbreak or fish kill can wreck a tourism season of manatee viewing or scalloping and damage our county's reputation for years. And it's not just about tourists: Clean water keeps property values strong and supports the tax base that funds everything from emergency services to road repairs. If we let our water quality slide into slime, we're risking far more than just a weekend paddle down the Chazz or a boating adventure out on the Homosassa or Ozello. Compared to expensive sewer upgrades and restoration projects, this is low-hanging fruit. It's a simple step with a big payoff: low-cost, high-impact, and it helps our local governments meet the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Secretarial Order (mandate) to reduce nutrient pollution through Basin Management Action Plans to restore our springs. Let's not wait to clean up our act until the damage is already done. Let's take action now to keep our springs blue and our grass green — together.

Maxine Connor

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Citrus County

https://www.chronicleonline.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/strengthen-the-fertilizer-ordinance/article_ea009c38-27a9-55db-988f-2bb9a41cdca2.html

TUSCANY RANCH APPROVED BY CITRUS BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON JULY 9

https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/tuscany-ranch-plan-ok-d-after-developer-concessions/article_33a1cb3a-3670-5944-8e3a-099111cb3538.html

FROM THE FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL

Become an informed member – sign up for free for their email list to get action alerts to your Inbox.

<https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/>

UPDATED BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS WERE FINALIZED ON 6/27/25

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 27, 2025

CONTACT: DEP Press Office, 850-245-2112, DEPNews@FloridaDEP.gov

DEP Advances Statewide Water Quality Protections with Updated Restoration Plans

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has adopted 28 updated nutrient Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs), marking a major advancement in Florida's commitment to improving water quality and fulfilling the requirements of the [Clean Waterways Act](#).

These BMAPs provide a science-driven, adaptive framework for reducing nutrient pollution in Florida's rivers, lakes, estuaries, springs and aquifers. Developed in collaboration with local governments, state agencies, utilities and other key stakeholders, each plan sets clear pollution reduction goals and identifies targeted projects and strategies to improve the health of Florida's waterbodies over the long-term.

"For years, DEP has worked closely with stakeholders across Florida to assess water quality, establish pollution reduction goals and identify projects and strategies to achieve meaningful, measurable improvements," said DEP Secretary Alexis A. Lambert. "Today's adoption of these plans is a significant milestone made possible through input, collaboration and dedication."

Stakeholder engagement played a key role in reaching this milestone. DEP hosted more than 60 public meetings and held over 100 one-on-one meetings with regulated entities. DEP will continue this collaboration as projects are implemented, progress is evaluated and plans are updated to reflect changing conditions and shared goals.

"These BMAPs reflect DEP's commitment to making data-driven decisions and maintaining transparency in our efforts to restore Florida's water resources," said Florida Chief Science Officer Dr. Mark Rains. "By incorporating rigorous scientific analysis and continuous monitoring, we are ensuring that our restoration strategies are both effective and adaptable to emerging challenges."

While each BMAP outlines localized projects, restoration activities may include wastewater treatment upgrades, stormwater projects, fertilizer ordinances and best management practices. These projects are implemented across various levels, including counties, municipalities and special districts.

The updated BMAPs feature a phased implementation, allowing for incremental project implementation while monitoring water quality changes and incorporating the latest scientific findings. These BMAPs are designed to evolve with science and conditions on the ground.

The Secretarial Orders adopting the 28 BMAPs were signed on June 27, 2025. All associated documents, including finalized BMAPs, meeting materials and recordings, are publicly available on DEP's [BMAP Documents, Meeting Materials and Recordings webpage](#). DEP's [Statewide Annual Report](#) provides additional detail on the progress across all BMAP-related projects.

BMAPS EXPLAINED: <https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/springsbmaps>

FACEBOOK PREVIOUSLY LIVE PRESENTATION ON 8/27/25 ON THE MOST RECENTLY RELEASED FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS – SPRINGS ADVOCACY 101 – WHY ARE FLORIDA SPRINGS STILL POLLUTED? WITH Q&A

You can click on the links below to view the recordings:

https://www.facebook.com/events/s/springs-advocacy-101-why-are-f/1170919251885695/?mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=ys3PxDyBnKVZoZdC&share_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F17JHkCvYzL%2F%3Fmibextid%3DwwXlfr%26_tn_%3D-R#

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpM15EiORE>

UPDATE ON THE NONPROFIT FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL TAKING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (FDEP) RE: THE SPRINGS HARM RULE

SPRINGS HARM RULE LEGAL CHALLENGE

FSC is going to court to Protect Springs from Over-Pumping

“UPDATE August 14, 2025

On Aug. 13, [FSC filed an appeal](#) with the 1st District Court of Appeal to overturn the decision made by the Administrative Law Judge on the “Springs Harm Rule”—our legal challenge against FDEP’s weak water use permitting rules proposed for Outstanding Florida Springs.

FDEP’s Rules are an unlawful end-run around the Legislature’s mandate in section 373.219(3), Florida Statutes, that FDEP adopt rules that prevent groundwater withdrawals from harming Outstanding Florida Springs. The new Outstanding Florida Springs permitting standard in 373.219(3), Florida Statutes, required FDEP to adopt new CUP rules that prevent harm specific to Outstanding Florida Springs. FDEP instead re-adopted existing rule language already applicable to all water bodies generally. As a matter of law, this Court should reverse the ALJ’s ruling upholding the Rules because: (1) the ALJ misinterpreted Supreme Court precedent that a judge need not make a threshold determination of statutory ambiguity before turning to available tools of statutory construction; and (2) the ALJ misinterpreted the statute’s plain language.

FSC staff and our attorneys have been hard at work on the appeal, and we’ll continue to provide updates as this moves forward.” Read the rest of the history on this issue here:

<https://www.floridaspringscouncil.org/springsharmrule>

SAVE CHASSAHOWITZKA CAMPGROUND – SIGN THE PETITION

Click on the link at the bottom of this article to sign the petition.

To: Southwest Florida Water Management District, Ron Desantis, Blaise Ingoglia, Gus Bilirakis, Rick Scott

Save Chassahowitzka River Campground

Campaign created by Ryan McGovern



The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) will close the 40-acre Chassahowitzka River Campground on Oct. 1 to assess extensive hurricane damage – and may ultimately recommend selling the property.

As a cherished place for families and outdoor enthusiasts for decades, this sprawling oasis of springs, winding rivers, wild life, and under water cave systems cannot be allowed to be sold to the highest bidder.

This area needs to be protected and be able to be shared with all Florida residents and tourist alike.

We don't want more condos, we don't want a golf course, we don't want our sacred past times threatened.

Keep this property open to the public for recreation and wild life conservation.

Why is this important?

We don't want more condos, we don't want a golf course, we don't want our sacred past times threatened.

Click here to sign the petition to save the Chassahowitzka River Campground:

<https://sign.moveon.org/petitions/save-chassahowitzka-river-campground>

FORMER SWFWMD EXEC SAYS 'DON'T SELL CAMPGROUND'

Citrus County Chronicle Article

- Aug 25, 2025 Updated Aug 26, 2025

- 2 min to read
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- Copy article link
- [Save](#)

"I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the Southwest Florida Water Management District's (SWFWMD) proposal to close and sell the Chassahowitzka Campground. This proposal, if implemented, would have significant negative impacts on our community, environment and local economy. I understand that its closure and potential sale risk severing an important connection to a much larger tract and diminishing the District's legacy of conservation leadership. Moreover, the decision appears to have been made with limited public input, leaving stakeholders – many of whom have long supported the District's work – feeling blindsided and unheard.

The Chassahowitzka Campground is not just a piece of land; it is a cherished natural resource that has been enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike. The campground, which spans 40 acres, is part of a much larger tract of approximately 5,700 acres. As such, it serves as a unique gateway for the public to access and enjoy natural Florida at its best, providing an opportunity for

people to connect with nature, engage in outdoor recreation, and appreciate the beauty of our region on a much larger scale. Surplus this land would mean losing a valuable asset that contributes significantly to the quality of life in our community. One of the primary concerns with the proposal is the potential environmental impact. The Chassahowitzka Campground is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, some of which are unique to this area. The preservation of this natural habitat is crucial for maintaining biodiversity and ensuring the health of our ecosystem. Developing or repurposing this land by private owners could lead to habitat destruction, pollution, and other environmental issues that would be detrimental to local wildlife, plant species and the Chassahowitzka River itself.

The campground also plays an important role in the area's local economy. It attracts not only campers but also boating tourists and a variety of other outdoor enthusiasts, who in turn support local businesses such as restaurants, shops and service providers. The loss of the campground could result in a significant decrease in revenue for these businesses, likely creating a ripple effect on the economic well-being of our larger Nature Coast community. It is essential to consider the long-term economic implications of this proposal and weigh them against any short-term financial gains.

There is also a social aspect to consider. The Chassahowitzka Campground serves as a gathering place for families, friends and community groups. It is a space where people have come together for generations to create lasting memories and strengthen social bonds. The loss of this communal space would be felt deeply by many in our community.

I urge the SWFWMD Governing Board to reconsider its proposal to surplus the Chassahowitzka Campground. The potential negative impacts on our environment, economy and community far outweigh any perceived benefits. I encourage my fellow Floridians to join me in voicing unified opposition to this proposal and advocating for the preservation of this valuable natural resource.

Sonny Vergara is the former executive director of the Southwest Florida Water Management District."

https://www.chronicleonline.com/news/local/former-swfwmd-exec-says-don-t-sell-campground/article_ced07e9d-05e4-5389-815a-b2879fd33036.html

RESTORE COMMUNITY PLANNING – FIX SENATE BILL 180 – ACTION ALERT - ACT NOW – TELL YOUR LEGISLATORS TO FIX SB 180 – THERE IS A PRE-WORDED MESSAGE WHICH YOU CAN SEND AS IS, CUSTOMIZE TO YOUR LIKING, OR DELETE AND WRITE YOUR OWN MESSAGE

Click on the link to the 1000 Friends of Florida Website to learn about SB 180 and its damaging impacts. Read the legal analysis.

SB 180 was presented as a storm recovery measure, but it has stripped local governments of their ability to plan responsibly for growth, flooding, and disaster resilience. Communities like ours need the freedom to protect neighborhoods, natural areas, and infrastructure -- especially as we face more intense storms and rapid development, and especially since we are a coastal community.

Ask your legislators to restore local planning authority by fixing this dangerous law. Local voices should guide local growth and development decisions -- not one-size-fits-all rules from Tallahassee.

TELL YOUR LEGISLATORS TO TAKE ACTION ON SB 180 HERE:

<https://1000fof.org/priorities/restorecommunityplanning/#/19/>

TALKING POINTS FOR SB 180: <https://1000fof.org/priorities/restorecommunityplanning/upcomingmeetings/>

WATCH THE 1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA CALENDAR FOR THE DATE AND TIME FOR THE CITRUS COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION MEETING

<https://1000fof.org/upcoming-events/>

UPDATES FROM FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Alachua County is proud to announce that our own [Stacie Greco](#) was recently named the 2025 Springs Partner of the Year by the [Florida Springs Council](#). Read more here:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=florida%20springs%20council>

[Rainbow River Conservation, Inc.](#)

[nSdptosroe0iyhu2224n6u0lg50aJ65h8t1cc17 6712tcra39a5a9af1244](#) ·

RRC would like to extend its gratitude to everyone who attended, making it an incredible event. The presentations were highly informative, and we hope attendees left with a better understanding of the potential negative impact of the proposed Paradise Meadow RV park on the Rainbow and Withlacoochee River. We appreciate Ryan Smart from the [Florida Springs Council](#) for emphasizing the need to unite in the fight for springs protection, legal action, and advocacy.

[Daytona Beach News-Journal](#) ·

Follow

[tonospdSeru:s2Paltu 80095m5f 602086Mm1uugtA2f3114 1c960 t952](#) ·

U.S. Rep. Randy Fine, R-Florida, has proposed a bill seeking to study converting Ocala National Forest into a national park to better protect springs.

[Florida Springs Council](#)

[tonospdSere:e2Paltu 11095m5f 60y086Mm1utsrYaf3114d2c960 t952](#) ·

The Florida Springs Council is interested in seeing the results of the study and what the benefits and possible additional protections would be for Florida’s springs.

However, we do have concerns with having these areas that are already protected as state parks and state forests instead be managed by federal agencies as well as the impact of converting the Ocala National Forest into a national park.

We applaud the state for how well they manage the state parks and state forests and don’t want to risk the protections, management and recreational opportunities that are already in place. We’d like to learn more about the changes in protections and public access that would result from the study area becoming a national park.

[Florida Springs Council](#)

[rnSesodtop87h3m1J 33:11aum500tggf1l 8aM 43m7i0u3a y00Pi3gf37](#) ·

#DYK To use more than 100,000 gallons of water per day requires a consumptive or water use permit issued by one of Florida’s water management districts.

To receive a consumptive use permit, an applicant must meet what is called the three prong test:

- 💧 Reasonable/Beneficial
- 💧 Does not interfere with existing uses
- 💧 IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

In the four water management districts containing springs, a permit has not been denied for the potential to cause harm to the water resources in over a decade. 🤔

🎥 Watch our Springs Advocacy 101 💧 Players & Policies Discussion on YouTube to learn more 🔗 Link in bio!

In the YouTube video, Consumptive Use Permits are discussed from 25:05-30:45

https://linkin.bio/floridaspringscouncil/?fbclid=IwY2xjawMcptpleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFNMzJhY1JwbkExTTlqUE9xAR6MjW60FfdITCH4tyxxRfcw9GWe8GW3ihyD9Xs4KNKWnf71rKVKoYNI6eJoUw_aem_RNT3Qou8UUq8fp1zEUn5Yw



Jan Hall, 2nd Vice President, Publicity chair, Program Planner, does flyers for publicity

Jan will be sharing photos from her archives which show members who have volunteered for League activities.



Pictured here from an event in 2015, Marie Pettibone and Kate Betsko at a voter service table in Liberty Park.
Volunteers make democracy work!

From the League of Women Voters of Florida

From Jessica Lowe-Minor, President of the League of Women Voters of Florida:

Dear Members,

This month marks the 60th anniversary of the [Voting Rights Act](#), a landmark federal law which secured voting rights for a host of American citizens who had been unfairly excluded.

Sadly, there have been—and continue to be—efforts to undermine the VRA, despite the critical role it plays in ensuring that all Americans are able to cast an equal vote in our electoral process.

Currently, we are fighting proposals that would require burdensome documentation and forms of ID in order to register to vote, and we are opposing efforts to stack the deck against voters through rushed, unnecessary, and partisan mid-cycle redistricting.

Here in Florida, we must let our legislature and the public know that we are watching. Over the next few days and weeks, please help us convey the following to your State Representative and State Senator:

- Say no to mid-cycle redistricting. Floridians have made it abundantly clear that they don't want political districts drawn with partisan intent. Legislators must adhere to the 2010 Fair Districts Amendments and the clear standards they provide.
- Florida families expect their elected leaders to focus on the kitchen table issues affecting voters' daily lives, such as rising insurance rates and housing affordability, not stack the deck for politicians through partisan gerrymandering.
- Redrawing congressional districts in the middle of the decade, on partisan grounds, without new Census data, defies the will of the people and undermines the Florida State Constitution.

We should not assume that this mid-cycle redistricting effort is a fait accompli. We have power as citizens and this is the time to use it. As we know from Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

From the National League of Women Voters

From CEO Celina Stewart, Esq.:

“Free, fair, and accessible elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. President Trump’s call to eliminate vote-by-mail is a direct attack on Americans’ freedom to vote.”

“Vote-by-mail is secure, accurate, and trusted by millions of voters – including older adults, military members, rural communities, tribal communities, voters of color, and voters with disabilities. Vote-by-mail has proven to expand voter participation in recent elections.”

“President Trump has no constitutional authority to take this action. Under our US Constitution, the states have the power to run elections, and only Congress can step in to regulate those elections when needed. This move is yet another overreach by an unpopular president who seeks to silence the public to hold onto power.”

“President Trump’s attacks on voting machines are similarly misleading and dangerous. Voting systems in the US already meet strict standards for security, accuracy, transparency, and accessibility, with paper ballots or audit trails to verify results. Scrapping machines in favor of hand counting would undermine election integrity and efficiency, not strengthen it. The League of Women Voters stands firmly for secure, modern systems that protect every vote and uphold public trust in our democracy.”

“The President should get his facts straight: he does not have the authority to regulate elections, states have strong measures to ensure voting equipment is secure, and many countries successfully utilize vote-by-mail.”

