



OCTOBER, 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](http://lwvcitrus.org)

Our email address is [LWVCC2013@gmail.com](mailto:LWVCC2013@gmail.com)

Our October 8, 2025 meeting will feature the YaYAS, a community group dedicated to helping homeless youth in Citrus County. See page 3.

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Our November 12 meeting features retired Judge Trish Thomas. See Page 4

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 OCTOBER EVERYONE!



## Major & Federal Holidays [🔗](#)

- Columbus Day: Monday, October 13, 2025
- Halloween: Friday, October 31, 2025

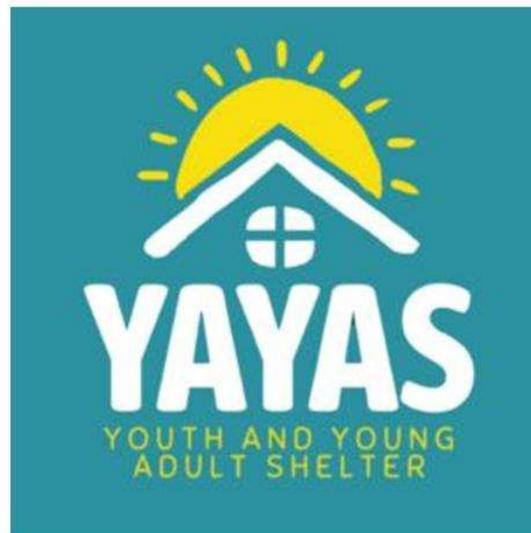
## Other Notable Observances [🔗](#)

- International Coffee Day: Wednesday, October 1
- International Day of Older Persons: Wednesday, October 1
- World Teachers' Day: Sunday, October 5
- World Mental Health Day: Friday, October 10
- National Coming Out Day: Saturday, October 11
- National Farmers Day: Sunday, October 12
- Ada Lovelace Day: Tuesday, October 14
- World Food Day: Thursday, October 16
- National Chocolate Cupcake Day: Saturday, October 18
- United Nations Day: Friday, October 24

# 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**

**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  
Wednesday, November 12,  
at 10:00 AM.  
Coastal Region Library,  
8619 W Crystal River,  
34428.**



The League of Women Voters of Citrus County will host the esteemed Patricia Thomas, retired Fifth Circuit Court Judge, at its November 12 meeting. Judge Thomas will address due process, discussing what it is in principle and in practice, how judges enforce it, and how to protect due process in the face of current threats in the U.S. A Q&A session will follow her presentation.

## **THE PUBLIC IS INVITED**

**For more information:**

**Please email [lwwcc2013@gmail.com](mailto:lwwcc2013@gmail.com). Visit [lwwcitrus.org](http://lwwcitrus.org) and Facebook page "League of Women Voters of Citrus County". The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization, never endorsing or opposing political parties or candidates. LWVFL develops positions on issues only after careful study and consensus.**



### Events in October 2025

**Month** Week Day October 2025 Go < Previous Today Next >

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 4:00 pm: Citrus County School Board meeting	15 7:00 pm: Zoom Meeting with Commissioner Jeff Kinnard	16	17	18

19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 9:00 am: Special Library District Advisory Board  1:00 pm: Board of Commissioners of Citrus County, Florida meeting	29	30	31	

This calendar is from our website:

[Lwvcitrus.org](http://Lwvcitrus.org)

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**Linda Abels, Membership Chair**

Happy October. This is the beginning of the Christmas Season. I bet you didn't know that, but look in some of the stores and you'll see Christmas is coming. If you're thinking I don't know what to get a good friend that has everything, what about a membership to the League of Women Voters of Citrus County? This gift lasts all year long and is educational. Think about it.

We do have a new member this month, please welcome **Jacqueline Scott**. Please introduce yourself to her at our next meeting.

Have a great month,

Linda

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**Vicky Iozzia, 1<sup>st</sup> President, Newsletter Editor,  
Webmaster, Speakers Bureau Chair**

Hello everyone!. I want to tell you about my trip to New York this summer, looking back many decades. I had sworn that I would not go back to New York, but when a friend asked me to be there for her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, I couldn't say no. I rented a car and planned to go to the place where I grew up and where I had worked. I grew up in East Meadow and lived part of my adult life in Westhampton, New York.

I grew up in a town called East Meadow in the middle of Long Island. They were told to take the cows to the "East Meadow". When I was growing up, it was "the country". Trees, nature, no traffic. We played baseball on the road in front of the house. There was vacant land on the block. When I drove by in July I was actually horrified. The houses seemed so much closer together. The street was lined with cars parked on both sides. I would not have recognized it. Nostalgia left me as I left Amherst Street.

I lived in Westhampton for 18 years. It is a tourist town, a lazy place in the winter, but this was summer. I recognized my first house, which was on a dirt road when I lived there. Now they have a smooth paved road (which I wish I had here in Citrus County!). Many other houses were built in the neighborhood. When I went into town, I did not recognize it. The quaint stores that were there were gone, replaced by brand name stores aimed at the tourism. Once again, I did not feel that I wanted to hang around.

The East Meadow that I remembered was from 70 years ago, and the Westhampton I remembered was from 30 years ago.

That started me thinking about where I live, in Citrus County. Growth is going to come. Nothing is going to stop it. People are going to move here, just as I did, to start a new life. How different will it look than today?

Where I live in Pine Ridge will stay basically the same, with houses being built on what is now vacant land. In other parts of the County, whole developments will rise. More people, more traffic.

I am attending the Board of County Commissioners meetings, and I watch it at home when I can't go. Our zoom meetings with the Commissioners (we have one with Jeff Kinnard on October 15) are informative. The Commissioners are working on a plan for growth. Everyone is not going to like whatever they approve, I am sure. Most people, I guess, won't even know what is going to happen until it actually happens. The Chronicle can only give us sound bites, because the only way you get the whole picture is by being there.

The schedule of meetings of the County Commissioner, School Board, and Library Board is in this newsletter, page 12. No excuse if you work during the day; you can watch them any time.

As the saying goes, there are three types of people: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. Which will you be?

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) **TAKEN – THANK YOU NORA CLOUD!**

**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.

Arrangements with Goodwill in Crystal River have already been made.

**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. **FLYERS TAKEN – LESLIE BRADLEY**

- 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](mailto:lwvcc2013@gmail.com)

## County Meetings

### **YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Community Meetings October - December 2025**

##### **Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)**

1:00 PM 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays:

Oct. 7, Oct. 28, Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Dec. 9, Jan. 6

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, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays: Oct. 28, Dec. 9

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, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays, Oct. 14, Nov. 11, Dec. 9

1007 Main St. Inverness 34450

Agenda & watch meetings online:

Citrus County School District/School Board tab/ Board Agenda

and Minutes:

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

View School Board Meetings:

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



### **League of Women Voters of Citrus County General Meeting, September 10, 2025**

The League was honored to have our Supervisor of Elections, Maureen (Mo) Baird, speak to us about her job and protection of our right to vote. What do you get when Mo is your speaker? The same thing that Citrus County gets when she is at work for us. Preparation with facts, understandable explanations of what she does as our supervisor, and all questions answered.

Mo started working full-time for the Supervisor of Elections Office full-time in 1985. She was elected as Supervisor of Elections in 2020 and again 2024. As a member of the Florida Supervisor of Elections, she mentors other Supervisors in the state. She is now preparing for the special elections: primary on September 30, and election on December 9.

She explained how she keeps the security and integrity of voting in Citrus. This includes making sure that new equipment works, keeping the list of voters accurate, hiring and training 400 poll workers, managing 32 polling places, 5 early voting sights, and working with 10 staff members. In 2024 27,000 voters voted by mail, and 46,000 voted early.

Our Supervisor of Elections is always looking ahead. She budgets carefully and has the backing of the Commissioners. She does outreaches throughout the community to register voters. She goes to the high schools to educate future voters. If the State decides to redistrict, she will be ready.

We are looking forward to next year, when we will arrange a trip to the office to see firsthand how things work.

She said exactly what we say at the League: “Your vote matters”.

To view her presentation, go to <https://youtu.be/p5vXggQf2wo>

A poster titled "ELECTION DATES" with a dark red header. The content is organized into sections: "2025 ELECTIONS" listing a Special Primary Election on September 30th, 2025 (with a last day to register/change party on Sept. 2nd, 2025) and a Special General Election on December 9th, 2025 (with a last day to register on November 10th, 2025). "2026 ELECTIONS" lists a Primary Election on August 18, 2026 (with a last day to register/change party on July 20, 2026) and a General Election on November 3, 2026 (with a last day to register on October 5, 2026). A "VOTE BY MAIL" section states that when returning a ballot by U.S. Mail, at least 7 days for delivery should be allowed, and return postage is prepaid. A "POLLS OPEN" section indicates that polls are open from 7am to 7pm on Election Day.

**ELECTION DATES**

**2025 ELECTIONS**  
Special Primary Election - September 30th, 2025  
**Last Day to Register or Change your Party - Sept. 2nd, 2025**  
Special General Election - December 9th, 2025  
**Last Day to Register - November 10th, 2025**

**2026 ELECTIONS**  
Primary Election - August 18, 2026  
**Last Day to Register or Change your Party - July 20, 2026**  
General Election - November 3, 2026  
**Last Day to Register - October 5, 2026**

**VOTE BY MAIL**  
When returning your ballot by U.S. Mail, please allow at least 7 days for delivery. The return postage is prepaid.

**POLLS OPEN**  
7am - 7pm Election Day

## More from our Supervisor of Elections, Maureen “Mo” Baird



### 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](http://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.

56107267

## Even more from Mo Baird

### How to Research Candidates

- ★ At [votecitrus.gov](http://votecitrus.gov) you can access the following information for each local candidate:
  - Candidate's Statement
  - Financial reports
  - Contact information
- ★ Candidate forums are very popular and happen throughout the county. Forums are a great opportunity to meet the candidates and see how they respond to different questions
- ★ If you are unable to attend a candidate forum they are sometimes also available to view online
- ★ Some candidates make appearances where you can meet and speak with them
- ★ Candidate websites or social media pages
- ★ Local newspapers
- ★ Local radio stations
- ★ Local news stations
- ★ The Elections Office can provide contact information for candidates. You can reach us at (352)564-7120

### How to Research Amendments

- ★ The Florida Division of Elections has summaries and the full text of each amendment on their website: [dos.elections.myflorida.com/initiatives](http://dos.elections.myflorida.com/initiatives)
- ★ Local news stations
- ★ Local newspapers
- ★ Web searches

### How to Research Appellate Judges and Supreme Court Justices

- ★ [Floridabar.org/public/faircts/votes010](http://Floridabar.org/public/faircts/votes010)
- ★ The Florida Bar produces pamphlets regarding appellate judges and Supreme Court justices participating in retention elections
- ★ The Florida Bar also does a statewide merit retention poll that asks in-state Florida Bar members to rate judges and justices who are up for retention votes and of whom they have direct knowledge
- ★ [Floridasupremecourt.org/Justices](http://Floridasupremecourt.org/Justices)
- ★ The Florida Supreme Court's arguments are webcast live and are archived at its website ([wfsu.org/gavel2gavel](http://wfsu.org/gavel2gavel)) and its Facebook Live page

### How to Register to Vote

You can register to vote online at [votecitrus.gov](http://votecitrus.gov) or call (352)564-7120 to request a voter registration application.



### Questions? Contact Us

Phone: (352) 564-7120  
 Email: [vote@votecitrus.gov](mailto:vote@votecitrus.gov)  
 Web: [www.votecitrus.gov](http://www.votecitrus.gov)  
 1500 N Meadowcrest Blvd  
 Crystal River, FL 34429  
 Mailing Address: PO Box 1870  
 Lecanto, FL 34460-1870



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

### How to Be an Informed Voter

A helpful guide on:

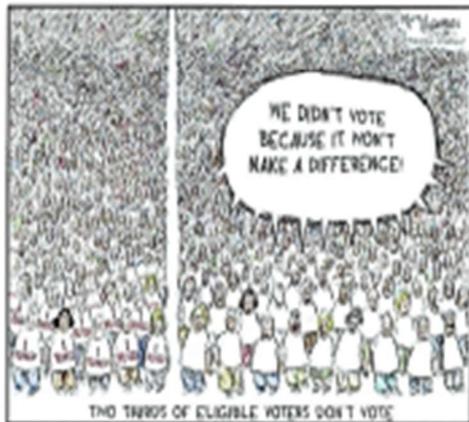
- ★ Why to vote
- ★ How to vote
- ★ How to research candidates
- ★ How to research amendments



## Why to Vote

- ★ Every election is determined by the people who show up.
- ★ Voting is a civic duty.
- ★ Generations of Americans fought and died for the right to vote.
- ★ Voting lets your voice be heard.
- ★ Voting allows you to support the change that you want to see (or prevent the change that you don't want to see) in your community, state, and country.
- ★ Your everyday life is affected by who is voted into office and what amendments are approved or not.
- ★ Every vote matters. Some races are so close that it can come down to a single vote.
- ★ Our government was designed for citizen participation.

Your vote does make a difference!



## How to Vote

A registered voter can choose any one of the three following methods to cast their vote:

1. Voting by Mail
2. Early Voting
3. Voting on Election Day

### **1. Voting on Election Day**

- ★ The polls are open from 7 am to 7 pm
- ★ You will need to bring a valid photo and signature ID with you
- ★ You must go to your assigned polling precinct. Your precinct assignment will depend on your residential address. To find out your assigned precinct go to [votecitrus.gov](http://votecitrus.gov) and click "Where Do I Vote?"

### **2. Early Voting**

- ★ Early Voting is held during the two weeks prior to each Election
- ★ You will need to bring a valid photo and signature ID with you
- ★ There are five Early Vote sites in Citrus County:
  - Central Ridge Community Center  
77 Civic Circle Beverly Hills, FL 34465
  - Central Ridge Library  
425 W Roosevelt Blvd Beverly Hills, FL 34465
  - Homosassa Public Library  
4100 S Grandmarch Ave Homosassa, FL 34446
  - Inverness City Hall  
212 W Main St Inverness, FL 34450
  - Supervisor of Elections Office  
1500 N Meadowcrest Blvd Crystal River, FL 34429  
(Use the side entrance marked Early Vote)
- ★ You can vote at any of the five Early Vote sites no matter where in the county you live

### **3. Voting by Mail**

- ★ Ballots are mailed out 4 to 5 weeks prior to each election
- ★ Our office only mails ballots to registered voters who request them
- ★ You can request ballots for specific elections only, or for all elections for the next election cycle
- ★ In order to mail your ballot to an address that we don't already have in your voter record, we need a request that includes your date of birth, signature, ballot address, and either your FL driver's license number, FL ID number, or the last four digits of your Social Security number
- ★ You can return your ballot:
  - By mail to PO Box 1870 Lecanto, FL 34460
  - In person at our office
  - In person at any Early Vote site during Early Voting dates and times
- ★ On Election Day, ballots must be turned in to our office. You cannot turn in your ballot at your polling precinct
- ★ Ballots must be received by 7 pm on Election Day
- ★ Don't forget to sign your vote by mail ballot envelope! We check the signature on every envelope for verification
- ★ You can request a vote by mail ballot for yourself or for an immediate family member by:
  - Requesting by phone at (352)564-7120
  - Filling out the mail ballot request form on our website: [votecitrus.gov](http://votecitrus.gov)
  - Filling out a vote by mail request form at our office





**League of Women Voters Social**  
**At Cattle Dog Restaurant in**  
**Inverness, September, 2025**

Come, join us! Have a cup of something or a meal. Join the conversation, or listen.  
Our next meeting is at the Cattle Dog Restaurant in Inverness, 4:00, **Wednesday, Oct. 22**

## From the new League of Women Voters Impact on Issue

### The Presidency

#### The League's Position

*Statement of Position on the Presidency, as announced by the national board, January 1976, and revised March 1982*

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that presidential power should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a dynamic balance between the executive and legislative branches. Accountability and responsibility to the people require that unnecessary secrecy between the President and Congress be eliminated. Therefore, the League supports the following measures:

#### *Executive Agreements*

Presidential authority to negotiate international executive agreements should be preserved. Accountability to the public requires that the President report to Congress the text of all such agreements and that Congress review them periodically.

#### *War Powers*

The President should be required to seek the advice of the Congress before introducing US armed forces into situations where hostilities are imminent, to report promptly to Congress any action taken, and to obtain within a specified time congressional approval for continued military activity.

#### *Emergency Powers*

significant orders issued under each. Congress should review the emergencies and significant orders issued under each. Congress should review the emergencies every six months and should have the power to terminate any time by concurrent resolution. (All states of emergency now in existence should be terminated after a period for adjustment.)

#### *Fiscal Powers*

The President should exercise executive responsibility for sound management of public funds in a manner consistent with the programs and priorities established by Congress. This requires procedures for congressional consideration of the budget as a whole and measures for congressional disapproval of presidential imposition of funds.

#### *Succession and Tenure*

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports the succession procedures spelled out in the 25th Amendment. However, the League favors a limit on the amount of time Congress may take to confirm the President.

The League also favors retention of a two-term limitation on presidential terms of office.

## **LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS**

District 11 open – December election will determine  
Spring Hill, 352 666-5707. Tallahassee 850-487-5011

Representative JJ Grow, District 23  
Inverness 352 560-6075 Tallahassee 850 717-5023  
[jj.grow@flhouse.gov](mailto:jj.grow@flhouse.gov)

US Senators and Representatives  
Senator Rich Scott Tampa 813 225-7040 Washington 202 224-5274  
<https://www.rickscott.senate.gov/contact/contact>

Senator Ashley Moody Washington 202 224-3041  
<https://www.moody.senate.gov/>

US Representative Gus Bilirakis Inverness 352 654-1004 Washington 202 225-5755  
<https://bilirakis.house.gov/contact/email>

US Capital Switchboard 202 224-3121 to contact any federal legislator.



**Peg Primeau, 2<sup>nd</sup> President, Reproductive Rights Chair**

**Peg will be back with an article for the next newsletter.**

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## Rosemary Nilles, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Gun Safety Chair, Education Chair

### Representative Democracy vs. Constitutional Republic



*Published in Citrus County Chronicle Sept. 13, 2025*

A recent Chronicle editorial about redistricting referred to the United States as a representative democracy. The keyboard warriors got feisty in arguing the language. Is the US a Constitutional Republic, or a Representative Democracy? The discussion has taken hyper-partisan overtones in recent years.

Let's start with the important fact that the words *Republic* and *Democracy* have nothing to do with political parties. For some, that seems to be a point of confusion.

The League of Women Voters (LWV), a nonpartisan political organization, uses the term democracy in its mission, "empowering voters and defending democracy." But when others argue, *America is not a democracy; it is a constitutional republic*, are they right or wrong?

For the well-being of our nation, for the common good, let's clear up the confusion. We checked multiple sources, representing various points of view. The upshot?

Both terms are correct! The United States is both a Constitutional Republic and a Representative Democracy. Here are the facts:

#### **Yes, America is a Constitutional Republic.**

Our founders designed a republic, as opposed to a monarchy, that derives its powers, directly or indirectly, from the people.

The US Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It defines our form of government and its structures. It protects the basic rights of all Americans. The founders wisely designed separation of powers across three branches of government—legislative, executive, and judicial—each with specific powers and limitations. They delineated certain powers to the states. By design, the structure of our government is based on republican principles.

#### **Yes, America is a Democracy, but not a direct democracy.**

Democracy is a form of government in which power derives from the people of the country. The founders were careful to not create a direct democracy, which they saw as mob rule. In a direct democracy, constituents would vote on every law, with majority rule. Imagine, for example, if 51% of the people capriciously voted to outlaw beef, the other 49% would be stuck without beef. The direct democracy of the ancient Greeks proved unsustainable.

The US has a representative democracy. Laws are passed by lawmakers elected by the people for defined terms of office.

Another way to put it is that our US government is based on republican principles which operate through democratic election of officials. That's why many call us a democratic republic.

### **How do the terms Representative Democracy and Constitutional Republic play out in America now?**

Consider the current conflicts about partisan gerrymandering. LWV opposes mid-term redistricting to gain political power. The League states that such actions erode our democracy because they take power from the voters, giving it instead to elected officials to further cement their advantage.

Yet it would also be correct to say that LWV opposes gerrymandering and mid-term redistricting because they erode the foundations of our constitutional republic: our fundamental rights to choose our leaders. So when a person, or a group such as the League of Women Voters, talks about preserving our *democracy*, they could just as well be saying our *constitutional republic*, or our *democratic republic*. These terms all imply principles outlined in the Constitution: rule of law; separation of powers; checks and balances; lawmakers chosen by voters; government by consent of the governed.

Constitutional Republic. Representative Democracy. This particular war of words is pointless and divisive. It's not an either/or. It's both.

Let's refocus our energy. Let's work together preserve the very values that we all treasure, upon which our nation depends: Rule of law. Separation of powers. Checks and balances. Power of the people. Our democracy. Our republic.

*LWV is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization, working to protect and expand voting rights; never endorsing or opposing political parties or candidates. We educate and advocate for issues of importance to citizens, only after careful study and consensus. Find us at [www.lwvcitrus.org](http://www.lwvcitrus.org) or [www.lwvfl.org](http://www.lwvfl.org).*

## IN THE NEWS

Interesting advice on what action we can take do to fight fascism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFIL5xrljHg>

I ran across this list of political donations during the last election. I found some interesting surprises.

<https://www.professorpride.com/post/228-companies-which-supported-trump-and-project-2025?srsltid=AfmBOoo3UN7QHfNd6XmmF4UgQQ2bipJad45n89md0gkSom2w-m57UxJM>

### From the ACLU

If you want to know what the ACLU is doing, go to [aclu.org](https://www.aclu.org) Their goals are similar to the League's: free speech following the constitution, abortion, immigrants' rights, voting rights, racial justice, transgender and lgbtq rights, reproductive freedom, and women's rights.

**Attorneys for a South Texas woman who was wrongfully charged with murder in 2022 for a self-induced abortion asked a federal court to deny what they said was an attempt by prosecutors to evade accountability.**

**Lizelle Gonzalez was arrested after she took an abortion pill while 19 weeks pregnant. She spent three days in jail before her \$500,000 bond was posted for her release. The charges were later [dropped](#).**

**The arrest happened just before the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. The Texas Penal Code still [prohibits](#) criminal prosecutions against women who induce their own abortions.**

**Attorneys for Gonzalez, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU of Texas, and the local firm of Garza Martinez, filed a 70-page briefing on Tuesday.**

**It alleged the Starr County district attorney, the assistant DA, and the sheriff pursued an arrest and indictment even though prosecutors knew of the exception.**

**They also alleged Starr County officials ignored Texas law, repeatedly and knowingly violated Gonzalez's constitutional rights, and attempted to hide their actions.**

## IN ACLU EMAIL, FROM WIRED MAGAZINE

**UNITED STATES CUSTOM** and Border Protection officials have sweeping powers to search anyone's phone when they are entering the country—including US citizens. Newly released figures show that over the past three months, CBP officials have been searching more phones and other devices than ever before.

From April through June this year, CBP searched 14,899 devices carried by international travelers, according to stats published on the agency's website. While the figures aren't broken down by device type, the CBP has the ability to search phones, computers, cameras, and other electronics. The April-June spike tops the previous highest quarterly figure of at least 12,766 devices, which were searched by CBP officials from January through March 2022, by 16.7 percent.

### FROM ACLU TEXAS:BY MR. M

#### I'M A TEXAS TEACHER. MY STUDENTS AND I ARE AFRAID.

Texas lawmakers are bullying children and pretending it's public policy.

Instead of fostering safe, inclusive environments for all students, state lawmakers have been making Texas public schools increasingly unwelcoming, even hostile, to LGBTQIA+, Black, Brown, Indigenous, and religious minority students.

**Texas students and educators are paying the price as certain state and federal politicians — backed by special interest groups — wage a coordinated campaign to censor curricula, ban books, impose state-sponsored religion, dismantle diversity programs, restrict libraries, target trans and immigrant students, and enforce discriminatory dress codes.**

In my English Studies classroom, I've noticed which stories get removed from the shelves. The books being challenged almost always center LGBTQIA+ characters, women's rights, racial justice, or the legacy of American imperialism — from "The Handmaid's Tale" and "One Hundred Years of Solitude" to "The Hate U Give."

I know firsthand how students are becoming disillusioned with every branch of our government, feeling as though policymakers don't have their best interests in mind. They feel ignored — citing not only the policies targeting their identities, but also targeting their environment and economic class. Instead of making public schools safe places to receive an inclusive education, lawmakers are trying to silence the voices of anyone who doesn't look or think the way they do. This is not only wrong — it can lead to harassment and bullying at school and puts students at a disadvantage to pursue

the lives and careers they dream of.

Students are fearful. I get it. As an immigrant, I fear the day that ICE comes banging on my door. As a gay man, I fear the hands that would gleefully pull me away from the person I love. But through this fear, I've learned to love the word "yet."

I fear the banging on the door, yet I know I have [rights](#) that will protect me. I fear losing the person at my side, yet I won't back down from holding them close to me in those dark days. I fear that I am alone, yet I have seen millions of people take to the streets to defend my life.

## RIP Andy Lahera



A tearful Michelle Lahera speaks Sunday afternoon at the funeral for her husband Andy. Matthew Beck / Chronicle photo editor

vant's heart, a family man.

"He'd say all the time, 'Your integrity is like a rod. And the moment that you bend it, it never quite bends back into the place it was. So the only thing that you can do is to keep your integrity straight. And never have to worry about bending it,'" Nicholas said.

Nicholas is Andy's son.

Michelle talks about Andy.



## BEST STOICS

A strong nation, like a strong person, can afford to be gentle, firm, thoughtful, and restrained. It can afford to extend a helping hand to others. It's a weak nation, like a weak person, that must behave with bluster and boasting and rashness and other signs of insecurity

**Jimmy Carter**



# **COUNTRIES WHERE THE MEDIA CANNOT CRITICIZE ITS LEADERS:**



**DO NOT GIVE UP**

**KEEP FIGHTING FOR THE GOOD**

**KEEP SHOWING UP**

**KEEP LOVING**

**KEEP GIVING BACK**

**KEEP BEING KIND**

**KEEP BEING BRAVE**

**KEEP CARING**

**KEEP TRYING NEW THINGS**

**KEEP SHOWING GRACE**

**THE WORLD NEEDS YOU TO**

**BELIEVE IN THE GOOD**



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## **Abuse shelter seeks specific items**

The Citrus County Abuse Shelter Association (CASA) needs help with donations of daily items to keep its pantry stocked.

■ High-priority needs: body wash, conditioner, tampons, Gain laundry detergent (allergy needs)

■ Household essentials: HE laundry detergent, paper towels, trash bags, dishwasher pods, disinfectant wipes

■ Personal care needs: ethnic hair care products, baby powder, baby wash, Tylenol and cold medicine for children

■ Pantry and food needs: Sugar, pancake mix, dressings, spaghetti, mac n' cheese, tacos/taco seasoning, mayonnaise, ketchup, milk, chicken broth, cake mixes, cooking oils, snacks for kids

■ Meat and protein: bacon, eggs, chicken/ground chicken, beef/ground beef, pork/ground pork

Drop items off at the CASA Outreach office between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, at 1100 E. Turner Camp Road, Inverness. Shelter needs can also be dropped off at their alternative drop off location, Carol's Interiors and Floors, 6410 S. Suncoast Blvd. in Homosassa.

For more information, contact Rane Herzek at 352-344-8111 or email [rherzek@casaf1.org](mailto:rherzek@casaf1.org).

**A fact is objective information.  
An opinion is a personal belief.  
Ignorance is a lack of facts.  
And stupidity is a rejection of facts  
in favor of opinions.**

Florida officials announce more than 6,000 immigration arrests in five months



## From Congressman Gus Bilirakis

***Honoring the Life and Legacy of Charlie Kirk:*** Last week, I had the profound honor of participating in a Prayer Vigil at the Capitol to celebrate and reflect on the life and legacy of Charlie Kirk. Charlie was a bold voice for truth, conviction, and faith in the public square. His unwavering commitment to our nation's founding principles and his fearless advocacy for the next generation will leave an enduring mark on hearts and minds across this country. As we gathered in prayer, we were reminded not only of Charlie's impact but also of our shared responsibility—to speak up with courage, to lead with purpose, and to bring our faith into the center of our national conversation. His legacy lives on in each of us who choose to stand for what is right, even when it is not easy.



**Showing up to register voters  
at Goodwill in Crystal River.**

**We set up to register voters on September 13, 16, and 20<sup>th</sup>. Peg Primeau was with me on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Dr. BJ Ezell on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and in photo, Jeanne Messersmith.**

**Voters Services Chair** position is still available!

## 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](mailto:Kathryn.Defranco@FLhealth.gov)

**Mark Pagan**

[Mark.Pagan@FLhealth.gov](mailto:Mark.Pagan@FLhealth.gov)



Scan here to register.

[Citrus.FloridaHealth.gov](http://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  
352-515-8085

Mark Pagan  
Mark.pagan@flhealth.gov  
352-515-8071



## Maxine Connor, Natural Resources Chair

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FROM LWVCC NATURAL RESOURCES CHAIR  
OCTOBER, 2025

**CITRUS RAINY SEASON FERTILIZER BAN  
PASSED! VICTORY FOR OUR SPRINGS!**



Michael McGrath speaks before the Citrus County Commission

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Citrus County Commission discussed and then voted unanimously to add a rainy season fertilizer ban to its current ordinance. Sierra Club Florida Chapter Lead Organizer Michael McGrath worked with the county to draft the revised ordinance and was introduced by the Utilities Director to speak first. He opened the hearing with a brief summary on how on improving the existing fertilizer ordinance to add the rainy season ban on nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) fertilizers and other items will protect our local springs, rivers, aquifer, and Gulf from nutrient pollution.

The adopted ordinance, effectively immediately, will:

- \*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 commercial applicator exemption.

**\*The existing ordinance already restricts applying fertilizer to newly laid sod for thirty days as is included in most other fertilizer bans statewide**

**\*Adds a restriction to not allow phosphorus application without a soil or tissue test for deficiency**

**\*Establishes upper limit for nitrogen per application and annually**

**\*Adds fruit trees and vegetable gardens to exemptions**

**Adventure Coast's DeeVon Quirolo delivered the group's appreciation to the Citrus County Commission and Michael McGrath for their efforts to achieve passage of the revised ordinance and listed the many local conservation organizations who endorsed the effort. She noted that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Basin Management Action Plans for Citrus County predicts that the rainy season ban would reduce nutrients by 146,796 pounds of nitrogen a year of a total of 448,323 pounds of nitrogen pollution a year from various inputs.**

**Several environmental leaders spoke in support of the ban, including Eugene Kelly, Adventure Coast Vice Chair, who spoke as president of the Florida Native Plant Society and Maxine Connor, Sierra Club Adventure Coast Citrus Conservation Chair, who spoke as Chair of the Natural Resources Committee of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County.**

**Landscapers and residents alike adapt quickly once they know the rules — and education, not heavy-handed enforcement, is the key. As we have in Hernando County, Adventure Coast Group offered to collaborate with Citrus County on an awareness campaign to spread the new rules. Studies show that those made aware of the rainy season rules usually follow them.**

*Article courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group*

#### **FERTILIZER ORDINANCE A WIN-WIN-WIN FOR CITRUS COUNTY'S WATERS**

**By Ryan Smart, Executive Director of the Florida Springs Council**



**What would Citrus County be without its world-class springs, rivers, bays, and estuaries? Simply put, it wouldn't be Citrus County.**

**I, and more than a million nature enthusiasts like me, wouldn't be traveling to Citrus County several times a year if it weren't for the opportunity to fish, scallop, kayak, camp, and swim in its incredible waters and natural areas. According to Discover Crystal River Florida, in 2024, visitors to Citrus County contributed more than half a billion dollars to the local economy. It's also likely that the population of Citrus County would not be growing nearly as fast without these wonders. Fifty years ago, Citrus County had 20,000 more residents than Levy County. Today, the population gap has ballooned to more than 120,000. But along with the economic growth and opportunities that new residents and tourists provide, they also stress and degrade the very waters that bring people to Citrus in the first place.**



If there were a simple, equitable and cost-effective solution to protect and restore these waters, and the economic boon they provide, it would be well worth taking. Which is why I am excited that this month the Citrus County Commission is primed to take a major step forward in the protection of Kings Bay, Homosassa Springs, Chassahowitzka Springs and all of the waters of Citrus County.

On July 29, the commission voted 4-1 to direct county staff to draft a strong urban fertilizer ordinance that includes a rainy season fertilizer ban, a requirement that all fertilizer contain a minimum 65 percent slow-release nitrogen, and a 25-foot setback from all waterbodies. Importantly, the ordinance would apply to both commercial fertilizer applicators and residential homeowners across Citrus County. The ordinance was approved by the commission. It will be among the most protective urban fertilizer ordinances in Florida. This makes eminent sense, as few places in Florida come close to having the collection of springs, rivers, estuaries and bays of Citrus County.

Unfortunately, Citrus County's springs are currently suffering from a combination of excessive nutrient pollution and decreased flows. According to the state's latest Outstanding Florida Springs Basin Management Action Plans (a fancy name for plans to restore water quality in springs), nitrogen pollution in Homosassa and Chassahowitzka Springs must be reduced by 65 percent and 60 percent, respectively, to achieve water quality standards. Similarly, nitrogen in Kings Bay must be reduced by 42 percent. These reductions are not only mandated by state law, but are necessary to protect aquatic vegetation, fisheries, recreation and Citrus County's economy from harmful algae.

Urban fertilizer is a major source of pollution tarnishing Citrus County's waters. Between the three Outstanding Florida Springs basins, urban fertilizer is responsible for more than 315,000 pounds of nitrogen entering the springs, rivers and Gulf each and every year. But, the proposed urban fertilizer ordinance can change that and put Citrus County on the way to achieving water quality standards. According to FDEP, the proposed fertilizer ordinance can reduce nitrogen from urban fertilizer at Kings Bay, Homosassa and Chassahowitzka Springs by 147,000 per year, a nearly 47 percent reduction.

The environmental benefits, however, are only half of the story. The Florida Springs Council did a cost-benefit analysis of adopting the proposed urban fertilizer ordinance. Our analysis found that adopting the ordinance would reduce as much nitrogen as converting more than 20,000 conventional septic tanks within Citrus County to advanced nitrogen removing septic systems, at a conservatively estimated cost of more than \$300 million. That comes out to more than \$1,800 per Citrus County resident and much more for homeowners needing to convert their septic systems.

The urban fertilizer ordinance is a win-win-win for Citrus County by protecting: Citrus County's springs, rivers and estuaries; its tourism-based economy; and the pocketbooks of Citrus County residents. That's why it is supported by the Florida Springs Council, Save Crystal River, and Josh Wooten, president of the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.

Citrus County deserves an urban fertilizer ordinance equal to the waters it will protect, and its residents deserve a low-cost and effective solution to restoring its springs, rivers, bays and estuaries. Commissioners deserve to be applauded for recognizing these facts and taking action.

Ryan Smart is the Executive Director of the Florida Springs Council and Past-President of 1,000 Friends of Florida.

[https://www.chronicleonline.com/opinion/columnists/fertilizer-ordinance-a-win-win-win-for-citrus-county-s-waters/article\\_2d76c160-3bfb-597f-8bd1-2d39dcea5216.html](https://www.chronicleonline.com/opinion/columnists/fertilizer-ordinance-a-win-win-win-for-citrus-county-s-waters/article_2d76c160-3bfb-597f-8bd1-2d39dcea5216.html)

**CHASSAHOWITZKA RIVER CAMPGROUND  
WILL REMAIN OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**



Image by Steve Newborn

The Southwest Florida Water Management District voted unanimously to allow Citrus County to manage the campground for the next 40 years.

Read the full article from WUSF here:

<https://www.wusf.org/environment/2025-09-24/chassahowitzka-river-campground-will-remain-open-public>

*Article courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group*

**PARADISE MEADOWS RV PARK  
RESET FOR HEARING NOV. 4 @ 5:01 PM**



Image by Wendy Melnik

This has been rescheduled for final hearing before the Citrus County Commission on Tuesday, November 4th. In September, The Citrus County Planning and Development Board denied this application to develop 49 wooded acres on CR 39 (1135 E. Withlacoochee Trail) in Dunnellon into a 230-unit RV park bordering the Withlacoochee River, a designated "Outstanding Florida Water". Robin Orlandi spoke for Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group, raising our concern about the impacts of proposed on-site wastewater treatment since this property is within a coastal lakes flood zone and has flooded in the recent past.

Local residents organized "Save Our Withlacoochee River" and over 40 attended to oppose it. They objected to the intensity and environmental impacts of this large-scale development on the area's wildlife corridors and the Withlacoochee River. Concerns were also raised about increased traffic on County Road 39 and noise disturbances in the surrounding communities.

Sierra Club Adventure Coast is concerned with the impacts of the proposed on-site wastewater treatment since this property is within a coastal flood zone that has flooded in past storms.

**On-site drain fields here would not adequately contain waste generated by the RV's, clubhouse, bath houses, restaurant and other facilities to prevent impacts to ground and river water quality. Concentrated RV holding tank blackwater is overlooked as a hazard. The county has no plans to provide advanced centralized wastewater treatment as current zoning requires.**

**Rescheduled for final hearing before the Citrus County Commission on Tuesday, November 4th. In September, the Citrus Planning and Development Board denied this application to develop 49 wooded acres on CR 39 (Withlacoochee Trail) near Dunnellon into a 230-unit RV park bordering the Withlacoochee River, a designated "Outstanding Florida Water". Robin Orlandi spoke for Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group, raising our concern about the impacts of proposed on-site wastewater treatment since this property is within a coastal lakes flood zone and has flooded in the recent past.**

***Article courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group***

### **STOP THE SAND MINE & FDOT'S LAND GRAB**

Stop the Sand Mine



It's been a long haul, but the jury is still out on a proposal to mine for sand on land originally owned by George Southworth in the Pine Ridge community of Crystal River. At the special master hearing June 27<sup>th</sup> Special Master Christian Waugh denied the application because it did not meet the final site restoration requirements of the comprehensive land use plan. The applicant's consultant, 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."

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 and a biological survey found gopher tortoises and Shermans fox squirrels. The property is native Florida sandhill habitat type and a minor component of emergent and forested wetlands. The applicant claims the land has been "cleared".

The matter was then scheduled before the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners on August 12, 2025, but the applicant abruptly requested a continuance. The official record of Citrus County dated August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, indicates that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) deposited \$2.2 million into the Citrus County Court Registry to take about 50 acres of the proposed mine site bordering the parkway by eminent domain. Reports now suggest FDOT is under contract to purchase the rest of the property.

FDOT's ownership takes the county out of the permitting process for those 50 acres. The state may now choose to move forward to mine for sand there by following required permitting procedures from SWFWMD and other entities. No information is available on the current status of the Environmental Resource Permit and whether sand mining will be allowed on the FDOT parcel without public review.

Sierra Club still has concerns. Adventure Coast Citrus Conservation Committee Leader Robin Orlandi submitted comments and attended the hearing seeking its denial and submitted additional comments for the second hearing. The application fails to assess potential impacts to the aquifer and "Outstanding Florida Springs" complex at Crystal River by downplaying risks to, and the proximity of the interconnected surficial and Floridan aquifers on the project site, as indicated in the hydrogeological survey. Prior to the FDOT sale, Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) permitting correspondence ([ERP App 912905](#)) repeatedly asked for additional information to verify adequate separation of the mining pit floor from sensitive

limestone as required by state statute. 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.

The removal of tons of protective, filtering sand layers above the aquifer, resulting in a large drainage pit for runoff during the excavation that may remain as a "lake" afterward, effectively provides a direct route to groundwater/spring recharge for contaminated runoff from the completed Suncoast Parkway and future residential development of the area. Conversely, potential impacts of site drainage are overlooked. The SWFWMD Crystal River Unincorporated Watershed Study indicates the site is within multiple 100-year, 24-hour floodplains.

The neighbors have organized to oppose the project and launched a petition drive. 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>  
<https://www.stopthesandmine.com/english-privacy-policy>

They are calling on the Florida Inspector General and elected officials to: Investigate FDOT's land acquisitions and contracts for the Southworth site; Require full environmental review and ERP compliance before any sand extraction occurs; Disclose FDOT's true intentions for both the seized 50 acres and the remainder of the site, and Protect the aquifer, springs, and public trust by ensuring no exemptions or shortcuts are allowed.

Mining activity that risks breaching the aquifer(s) at this site, potentially affecting volume and rate of flow to the Kings Bay/Crystal River springs group, and creating vectors for contamination should not be permitted. Damaged springs and aquifers can't be restored. FDOT's maneuvers—waiving hearings, ignoring rulings, cancelling public input, and taking land—sets a dangerous precedent for our state. This is not just about one mine—it's about whether **public process, science, and environmental protection still mean anything** in Florida.

*Article courtesy of Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group*

## **FLORIDA WANTS TO BUY 4 ACRES IN THE PANHANDLE. THE PRICE TAG? \$83M**

**Article in Tampa Bay Times 9/26/25**

Top state officials will vote on the purchase next week. Conservation experts have concerns.

Florida's top leaders will vote Tuesday to purchase these 4 acres of land in Okaloosa County for more than \$84 million. One side of the Destin property is a city park, and the other side is an upscale condominium complex, according to property records. [ Okaloosa County Property Appraiser ]

By

- [Max Chesnes](#) *Times staff*
- [Emily L. Mahoney](#) *Times staff*

[https://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/2025/09/26/florida-land-deal-destin-okaloosa-desantis-donor/?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=SocialFlow&utm\\_content=FBtimes&fbclid=IwY2xjawNE2pdleHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHpegFnViZygyYhvrfX3T-dFsrNzg7Hut0IFGJ2QRA8wz5CdpuFv3CKuVtAVy\\_aem\\_s\\_K42Gh4lQndF7MWZko60g](https://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/2025/09/26/florida-land-deal-destin-okaloosa-desantis-donor/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialFlow&utm_content=FBtimes&fbclid=IwY2xjawNE2pdleHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHpegFnViZygyYhvrfX3T-dFsrNzg7Hut0IFGJ2QRA8wz5CdpuFv3CKuVtAVy_aem_s_K42Gh4lQndF7MWZko60g)

## **Florida Springs Council**

[teosnpdorS21l6t90h99f24185g1lt375h16hll0h5160hh48fc590cahi18](#) ·

**What if...hear us out...instead the state used these funds to acquire one of the high priority projects on the Florida Forever list, for example:**

- 💧 Florida's First Magnitude Springs - \$60.8 million to acquire the project's remaining 6,771 acres
- 💧 Wakulla Springs Protection Zone - \$75.5 million to acquire the project's remaining 3,296 acres
- 💧 Aucilla/Wacissa Watershed - \$81.9 million to acquire the project's remaining 41,129 acres

<https://www.facebook.com/floridaspringscouncil#?hda>

[Daytona Beach News-Journal](#) ·

[tonospdSeru:s2Paltu 80095m5f 602086Mm1uugtA2f31l4 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](#)  
[September 18 at 11:08 AM](#) ·

“An environmental group, the Florida Springs Council, has been fighting for years to get DEP to follow the law, so far with little success. I was curious about **what their longtime executive director, Ryan Smart, thought of Fine’s national park proposal**. The answer: Not much.

“I can’t see any way in which it will benefit Florida’s springs,” he told me.”

[https://floridaphoenix.com/2025/09/18/national-park-proposed-for-florida-springs-doesnt-spring-from-desire-to-fix-problems/?fbclid=IwY2xjawNE-PJleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHnaFbJFDo5F-hdynq0XC\\_QZKr6-kARe1NEOJqGfKM7ln5uUC0Pd4PB01-P91\\_aem\\_8vyP52-3NnrHyfiXivs5Bg](https://floridaphoenix.com/2025/09/18/national-park-proposed-for-florida-springs-doesnt-spring-from-desire-to-fix-problems/?fbclid=IwY2xjawNE-PJleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHnaFbJFDo5F-hdynq0XC_QZKr6-kARe1NEOJqGfKM7ln5uUC0Pd4PB01-P91_aem_8vyP52-3NnrHyfiXivs5Bg)

[Craig Pittman](#)  
[September 18 at 9:06 AM](#) ·

**The push to create a Florida Springs National Park doesn't spring from a desire to really fix what's wrong with the springs.** My latest column for [Florida Phoenix News](#) also features shout-outs to Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Fantastic Four.

[Florida Springs Council](#)  
[tonospdSere:e2Paltu 11095m5f 60y086Mm1utsrYaf31l4d2c960 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.

#### FROM THE FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL

**Become an informed member** – sign up for free for their email list to stay informed on how to protect our springs and get action alerts to your Inbox especially during our State Legislative Session.

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

#### 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.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 taking legal action 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 (Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection) 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 (Consumptive Use Permit) 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 (Administrative Law Judge) 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 (Florida Springs Council) 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>

**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/>

### **CITRUS COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION MEETING – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025 – 9AM TO NOON**

#### **Event Details**

The Citrus County Legislative Delegation meeting will be held on Friday, October 31, 2025, from 9:00 am until Noon at the Board of County Commissioners Chamber, 110 N. Apopka Ave., Inverness, FL. 34450. The purpose of this meeting is the discussion and consideration of local bills scheduled to be filed in the Florida Legislature, to provide a forum for the public to address members of the Legislative Delegation and conduct other delegation business in preparation for the 2026 Legislative Session.

If you would like to be placed on the agenda for discussion relating to the local bill(s) or any issue, please contact the office of State Representative JJ Grow at (352) 654-0490 or email Dawn Faherty at [Dawn.Faherty@FLHouse.gov](mailto:Dawn.Faherty@FLHouse.gov) to be added to the agenda no later than Monday, October 27, 2025.

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

### **OTHER UPDATES FROM FACEBOOK PAGES OF FLORIDA SPRINGS COUNCIL'S AND OTHER PERTINENT ONES**

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.**

January 21

[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 Rivers. 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.

### [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=IwY2xjawMcptpleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFNMzJhY1JwbkExTTlqUE9xAR6MjW6OFfdITCH4tyxxRfcw9GWe8GW3ihyD9Xs4KNKWnf71rKVKoYNI6eJoUw\\_aem\\_RNT3Qou8UUq8fp1zEUUn5Yw](https://linkin.bio/floridaspringscouncil/?fbclid=IwY2xjawMcptpleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFNMzJhY1JwbkExTTlqUE9xAR6MjW6OFfdITCH4tyxxRfcw9GWe8GW3ihyD9Xs4KNKWnf71rKVKoYNI6eJoUw_aem_RNT3Qou8UUq8fp1zEUUn5Yw)

### [Florida Springs Council](#)

View the video of the live discussion, [Springs Advocacy 101](#), for a deep dive into [Minimum Flows and Levels, Recovery Strategies & Water Use Permitting](#) - PART 3 OF THE SPRINGS ADVOCACY 101 SERIES -

This LIVE DISCUSSION was hosted on the Florida Springs Council's Facebook and YouTube on Wednesday, September 24 at 6:30 p.m.

<https://www.facebook.com/floridaspringscouncil/videos/1433188544430306>

### [Rainbow River Conservation, Inc.](#)

[September 5 at 8:06 PM](#) ·

The room was filled with approximately 200 people tonight as **keynote speaker Jim Gissy** shared his “rags to riches” story. His dream of owning river front property was born floating down the Ichetucknee River as a little boy, coming from a poor family. Owning large amounts of property in Dunnellon years after his river experience had citizens concerned and rumors brewing about possible development.

Mr. Gissy was kind enough to answer questions from individuals to put rumors to rest.

One thing is certain, people of Dunnellon treasure the peace and quiet of the small town and love the liquid blue gem, the Rainbow River, that flows through it.

The biggest take away of the evening was Jim Gissy escaping to Dunnellon to get away from development as well. He enjoys escaping the hustle and bustle of the big city and has no intentions to change that.

Gissy stated he is going to just enjoy the “green and all the trees” on the land he owns and is “...not gonna do anything...”

RRC would like to thank everyone attending and putting the event together!

### **UPCOMING CLEAN ENERGY & CLIMATE EVENTS IN FLORIDA OCTOBER 2025**

#### **National Drive Electric Month (NDEM)**

- Fri 9/12 - Sun 10/12/2025
- Previously called “National Drive Electric WEEK (NDEW)”, this national EV event now encompasses an entire month
- To find an EV event near you: <https://driveelectricmonth.org/events-list>

#### **American Solar Energy Society (ASES) 30th Annual Solar Tour:**

- Fri 10/03 - Sun 10/05/2025
- Virtual & in-person tours of residential & business rooftop solar arrays
- To find a tour near you: [www.nationalsolartour.org](http://www.nationalsolartour.org).

#### **Florida Climate Week**

- Mon 10/06 - Sun 10/12/25

- Focuses on raising awareness & addressing Florida's climate-related challenges
- Virtual & in-person events held throughout the state all week
- To find an event: <https://floridaclimateweek.org/schedule-of-events/>

### **FEDERAL CLEAN ENERGY POLICY UPDATES:**

**Clean Energy Tax Incentives Ending this year:** The “Big Beautiful Bill” that was passed in July, 2025 imposes new end dates for many IRA clean energy programs & incentives including:

- Electric Vehicle Tax Rebates END 9/30/25
- Solar & energy efficiency upgrades Tax Rebates END 12/31/25
- For details, see article below:

**Take Advantage of Clean Energy Tax Incentives Before It's Too Late** (by Serena Golden for SACE 8/19/25) The Trump Administration's one big budget bill eliminates clean energy tax incentives on an aggressive timeline. Some tax credits that were previously scheduled to be available through 2032 are now ending as early as Sept 30, 2025. Here are the tax credits you should consider using while there's still time.

<https://cleanenergy.org/news/take-advantage-of-clean-energy-tax-incentives-before-its-too-late/>

To read more about recent federal policy changes visit the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) website:

[https://cleanenergy.org/our-views/?visc-qf-news\\_tax\\_filter\\_topic%5B%5D=energy-policy](https://cleanenergy.org/our-views/?visc-qf-news_tax_filter_topic%5B%5D=energy-policy)

**Inside the EPA's Disastrous Proposal to Eliminate the Endangerment Finding:** (by Chris Carnevale SACE 9/9/25) EPA political appointees have proposed prohibiting federal limits on greenhouse gas climate pollution. <https://cleanenergy.org/news/inside-the-epas-disastrous-proposal-to-eliminate-the-endangerment-finding/?emci=0de24c08-fa8f-f011-b484-6045bdeb7413&emdi=63164526-9a94-f011-b484-6045bdeb7413&ceid=6152255>

**Southern Alliance for Clean Energy Comments on Proposed Rescission of the Endangerment Finding** (by Chris Carnevale SACE 9/23/25) SACE strongly opposes the EPA's proposal to rescind the Endangerment Finding, which threatens vital climate protections. Our official comments emphasize stronger scientific evidence and affordable clean energy solutions that reinforce the finding's importance. <https://cleanenergy.org/news/sace-comments-on-proposed-rescission-of-the-endangerment-finding/>

**Transportation Electrification in the Southeast: Sixth Annual Report Sept 2025** (by M. Vining & M. Khatib for SACE) (45 pages) This report discusses the progress of southern states in EV sales and charging infrastructure <https://cleanenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/Transportation%20Electrification%20in%20the%20Southeast%202025.pdf>

Updated 9/27/25



**Jan Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

**Jan will have something for us in the next newsletter.**



