

October 2018

HOW REALTORS® CAN HELP

From political ads to national news headlines, Florida's water quality issues have heightened public awareness and concern.

NABOR® member and Executive Director of Collier County Water Keeper Harrison Langley encourages REALTORS® to share the following THREE messages with buyers and sellers about Collier County's current water quality situation:

1) RED TIDE IS TEMPORARY

Red Tide (*Karenia Brevis*) is a naturally occurring saltwater algae bloom that may collect on the beach during a very hot and wet summer. Several federal and state water quality projects are in place to reduce its severity by controlling future algae overgrowth.

NOTE: The blue/green algae blooms (Cyanobacteria) laying on the surface of freshwater canals in Lee County have never been present in Collier County canals.



Naples Area Board of REALTORS®

Water Quality Advisory



As the voice of REALTORS® in the Naples area, NABOR® has and will always advocate for action to reduce or eliminate any manmade or environmental threats to homeownership, property values and the living standards in Florida.

SWF WATER QUALITY THE ISSUES & SOLUTIONS

Florida's rare and beautiful natural resources, the public's health, and the state's economy are suffering from a water quality crisis. Fortunately, there is not one elected official in Florida who does not support actions to improve our current conditions.

At the September business meeting NABOR® hosted Congressmen Francis Rooney and Mario Diaz-Balart, who discussed Florida's water management and restoration plans.

Short and Long-term Remedies

Both Congressmen support the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) which was approved by Congress in 2000. It included 68 projects at a cost of \$7.8 billion (now estimated to cost over \$16 billion). The two have kept the plan a priority plus they backed additional federal water bills and an ambitious land acquisition project for more stormwater treatment facilities, reservoirs and protected marsh land.

The Congressmen co-sponsored two bills that passed earlier in the year to allow the Army Corps of Engineers the ability to conduct additional projects to improve water infrastructure and repairs. The duo were also instrumental this year in getting Congress to redirect funds to complete the Herbert Hoover dike repairs within five years.

Future projects they support include the restoration of over 55,000 acres of over-drained wetlands in Southwest Florida, bridge construction on Tamiami Trail to allow more natural flows to the Everglades, restoration efforts on Kissimmee River to help control Lake Okeechobee water levels, and solutions to protect Florida's aquifers from salt water intrusion.

2) OUR BEACHES ARE NOT COVERED IN DEAD FISH

Despite videos circulating on social media of dead fish piled across the beach, Collier County beaches are not experiencing that level of fish loss. In fact, no large whales, sharks, or porpoise (dolphins) have been found dead on Collier shores or in canals.

NOTE: The recent accumulation of dead fish in Moorings Bay (Oct. 7th) was a result of Hurricane Michael, which created very high tide levels that pushed canal water into nearby sewer pipes. As the tide receded, a *Cylindrotheca* algae bloom formed that killed fish living in the bay. This is a different algae than what causes red tide.

3) SUPPORT INCREASED WATER TESTING IN COLLIER

Steps to protect water habitats from high nutrient output cannot be taken without proper environmental testing. But budget cuts have reduced water testing to monitor nutrient levels in Collier County.

TIP: Ask your elected government officials to increase funding for future testing or donate to a registered marine or water-quality agency that has the ability to perform the tests and monitor for irregularities.

SWF Water Quality: The Issues & Solutions

South Florida Water Quality Roundtable

On October 9, NABOR®'s Governmental Issues Committee sponsored the South Florida Water Quality Roundtable featuring panelists Gaston Cantens, VP of Corporate Relations for Florida Crystals and Eric Eikenberg, CEO of the Everglades Foundation. Many elected officials from Lee and Collier Counties attended as well as concerned citizens and members of several local water quality advocacy groups.

The main topic of debate was water quality issues involving Lake Okeechobee and the release of its overly nutrient-rich waters into the Caloosahatchee River and St. Lucie Canal. These releases contribute greatly to increased algae blooms on both coasts.

Cantens argued that the solution is to treat water before it enters the lake because releases to the east and west coasts will never end despite current projects to restore flow to the Everglades. Alternately, Eikenberg pressed for building more reservoirs and stormwater treatment facilities south of the lake in order to re-engineer water flow into the Everglades and Florida Bay thus saving those habitats.

Want to read more about what the Congressmen had to say about water quality projects in Florida? Go to NABOR.com/News and select "U.S. Congressmen Present Water Quality Update to REALTORS®."

View a video of the entire South Florida Water Quality Roundtable event on NABOR.com or click [HERE](#).

WATER SCIENCE

The University of South Florida's College of Marine Science recently completed a study using a robotic water glider that confirms circulation changes in the Gulf brought cooler temperatures and salt to shore thus creating a severe red tide bloom that affects all Florida coasts.

Two Florida counties located north of Lake Okeechobee hired AECOM to deploy a custom-built, mobile algae harvesting unit that separates algae biomass from water. Once harvested, it converted the recovered algae into two streams: a dense algae biomass that becomes a solid and a second that filters the green-brown algae water into a clear water stream.

Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium is researching the benefits of several remedies to red tide including the use of "living dock" structures that would be covered with filter-feeding animals to remove red tide from canals; Ozonation to destroy red tide algae and their toxins in limited areas; and the use of algae in the *Amoebophrya* genus to serve as a natural control parasite for *K. brevis* red tide blooms.

RESOURCES

[Collier County Watershed Management Plan](#)

[Florida Department of Environmental Protection](#)

[Collier County Water Keepers](#)