

Sutton, Kaitlyn

From: Andrew Smith <smithandrewrobert3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2019 2:32 PM
To: Sutton, Kaitlyn
Subject: WATER QUALITY PUBLIC COMMENTS

To whom it concerns,

I have done genetic work with coastal ecosystems including bald eagles and beach mice. I also am a recreational fisherman. I think it is fairly obvious what the problems are triggering our water issues.

Fertilizer runoff and septic systems leeching nutrients into our water. As well as commercial exploitation of our aquifer. The science is out. Now the question is what to do about it. Places around indian river lagoon need city sewers. Places around Ginnie springs have similar issues with outdated septic tanks as opposed to modern day sewage systems.

Red tides and blue green algae seem tied to lake okeechobee blooms and discharges and are gruesomely apparent. However, less apparent are the brown algae blooms which choke out light in the estuary of indian River lagoon destroying seagrass. This gets less media attention. But without seagrass our fishery fails.

This estuary is the so called nursery of our fishery. The blue green algae from the okeechobee water issues may be a bigger problem to solve, politically, with pressure from big sugar. But it's a problem. Then there is red tide. I think it is safe to assume these are correlated with okeechobee discharges as well. In this sense, I hate the talking point that "red tide is natural." Brain cancer is natural too, but usually there is an underlying mutagen that causes brain cancer, like radiation. Red tide may be natural, but there is an underlying issue when we get a red tide surrounding the entire peninsula. That isn't "natural" but instead it is a symptom of a bigger, underlying problem. I don't know what the solution is, but allowing commercial interests to pump millions of more gallons out of our aquifer isn't the answer.

Updating sewers, preventing discharges, and imposing science based limits to extracting water from our aquifers will go a long way in mitigating this tragedy of the commons we are enduring.

Best,

Andrew R. Smith