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June 29, 2021

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000
via Email: Stormwater2020@floridadep.gov

Re: Stormwater Rulemaking required by Section 5 of Chapter 2020-150, Laws of Florida

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for considering our comments as you work towards strengthening Florida's stormwater design and operation regulations. 1000 Friends of Florida is the state's leading nonprofit smart growth advocacy organization. As Florida's population steadily increases, so does the total amount of land converted to impermeable surfaces, thus making scientifically sound stormwater regulation a critical component of growth management and in preventing nonpoint water pollution from urban, agricultural, and industrial runoff harming our waters. We appreciate the stormwater Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) considering Florida's population growth trends in all regulatory recommendations.

This TAC is charged with developing and providing consensus stormwater recommendations for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Water Management Districts. When the 1990s stormwater regulations were last examined during the 2008-2010 rulemaking period, the 2010 TAC came to consensus and drafted the "Environmental Resource Permit Stormwater Quality Applicant's Handbook." The 2010 draft handbook was the product of several years of deliberation and collaboration from experts in the public and private sectors and contains many recommended policies to improve stormwater regulations and protect Florida's water quality. **We ask the 2021 TAC to build upon the March 2010 draft handbook for stronger protections that reflect the advances in our technological and scientific understanding of hydrologic and climate systems. The draft handbook should be included as an agenda item for review and discussion in an upcoming TAC meeting.**

As stated by DEP, the TAC members represent every facet of stakeholder groups that should provide input on stormwater management. They have been entrusted with the enormous duty and responsibility of finding consensus on highly technical regulatory recommendations – not a quick and easy task. We recognize the need to keep the stormwater rulemaking process moving in a timely manner and understand there is a lot of technical material to cover in TAC meetings. However, during the June 9, 2021 TAC meeting, DEP explained a rulemaking process that would exclude the opportunity for TAC members to review the proposed draft they have been shaping before formal rulemaking is initiated. **The TAC members should review and comment on the**

initial draft of the revised rule related to stormwater design criteria to ensure that their recommendations were adequately incorporated into the updated rule *before* the TAC is adjourned. We recognize that DEP has the authority to make changes to the rule prior to the initiation of formal rulemaking as well as during the rulemaking process. We believe this would benefit DEP and the public and private stakeholders invested in this process, and result in stronger water quality protections

Respectfully,

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