Senator Bradley, Representative Cummings Announce
Doctors Lake Water Quality Projects

August 15, 2018

Orange Park - At an event at Orange Park Town Hall today, Senator Rob Bradley (R-Fleming Island) and Representative Travis Cummings (R-Orange Park) announced funding for projects to improve the health of Doctors Lake, a tributary of the St. Johns River in Clay County.

During the 2018 legislative session, Senator Bradley chaired the senate appropriations committee and, working with Representative Cummings, secured funding for the St. Johns River to implement projects that will help restore the river, its tributaries, and the Keystone Heights Lake Region. The funds will also be used to improve public access and fund recreation projects within the St. Johns River Water Management District.

With Governor Scott’s support and approval of the budget, the District, Clay County and Clay County Utility Authority (CCUA) partnered to identify potential projects in the area. “As residents of Clay County, Representative Cummings and I saw the very real need to address issues along the St. Johns River basin,” said Senator Bradley. “Just as the Everglades, the springs and beaches define areas of our state, this river defines our region. We felt it was time to focus state funds on the natural resources here at home.” Bradley pointed to the current algae bloom at Doctors Lake as evidence that the funding is critical to the region. “We all see, right now, how critical this funding is and how important these projects are to restoring and preserving these natural resources.”

“I am very concerned about the health of Doctors Lake and the St. Johns River,” said Rep. Cummings. “Every resident can partner with the District and other agencies to take care of our environment. During the 2018 Legislative Session, Sen. Bradley and I worked tirelessly to successfully secure the needed funding to combat the algae blooms and other troubling issues. With the identified solutions, we can work together to improve Doctors Lake so Clay County residents may enjoy our precious natural resources for generations to come.”
“This region was uniquely fortunate this year to have Sen. Bradley leading the budget effort in the Senate and Rep. Cummings providing leadership and support in the House,” said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle. “These proposed projects focus efforts on Doctors Lake, which has experienced water quality concerns for decades. As always, we look to the science to guide us in making sound decisions about project opportunities.”

Projects announced today include:

- Septic-to-sewer projects extending the CCUA infrastructure to serve lakeside neighborhoods currently on septic systems. The project will convert area homes to central sewer and could reduce total nitrogen entering Doctors Lake by approximately 1,881 pounds per year.

- Replacing old or failing septic tanks with Individual Distributed Sewer Systems in areas where conventional sewer service is not available or feasible, which will provide treatment that is comparable to that of wastewater treatment facilities. Utilizing this new technology may provide onsite nitrogen reduction up to an estimated 1,125 pounds per year.

- The Doctors Lake Enhanced Effluent Treatment Project, which will provide innovative technology to remove phosphorus from wastewater effluent. The proposed project will treat a minimum 2 million gallons per day on an annual average basis. This project will remove an estimated 6,500 pounds per year of total phosphorus.

The proposed sewer service extension and innovative technology could remove 25 percent of the nitrogen in the lake watershed, based on watershed modeling estimates.

For future updates on the projects, visit www.sjrwmd.com.

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