



Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284 ❖ Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

March 2013

website: www.fssr.org email: info@fssr.org ph: 772-202-0501

The mission of the Friends of St. Sebastian River is to maintain and improve the health and beauty of the St. Sebastian River and its watershed.

STORMWATER PARK TO IMPROVE NORTH PRONG WATER QUALITY

The St. Johns River Water Management District is developing a new stormwater management park that will help improve the quality of water draining to the North Prong of the St. Sebastian River. The park, known as the Wheeler Grove Stormwater Park, will be located near the area off Micco Road, used for disposal of the muck dredged from the St. Sebastian River in the recent past.

Ralph Brown, Project Engineer with the St. Johns River Water Management District will give a presentation at our meeting this month, on their latest project in the watershed of the St. Sebastian River. Drainage to the North Prong comes from the area around Barefoot Bay and the Sotille canal. The canal extends to the west from Barefoot Bay, crossing Babcock Road just north of the Deer Run development.

The Sotille canal (among others) enlarges the watershed of the St. Sebastian River, by extending through the “ten-mile ridge”, which historically was its western limit along the east coast of Florida. While development in the vicinity of the canal is limited today, that likely will change with future development of the properties annexed by the city of Palm Bay, the Palm Bay Parkway (www.palmbayparkway.com), and the new I-95 interchange (www.palmbayinterchange.com).

Partial funding for this park is mitigation monies from the I-95 widening project in southern Brevard County. Taylor Engineering was contracted by St. Johns for the design of the stormwater park and additional details about the project can be found on their website at <http://taylorengeering.com/our-gallery-4/sotille-canal/>.

Mr. Brown will also provide an update on the Fellsmere Water Management Area, which is the last large wetland restoration/water storage area in the headwaters of the St. Johns River. We had a presentation on this project in September 2010 and the project is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Our meeting is **Tuesday, March 26, 7:30 PM** at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd. in Sebastian and all are welcome to attend.

FLORIDA'S GUIDE TO COASTAL ACCESS

Florida's coast offers a variety of natural habitats—sand dunes, salt marshes, wild mangrove-filled barrier islands and spectacular coral reefs—as well as historical sites, state parks, fishing communities, yacht-lined marinas and urban centers.

The Florida Coastal Management Program has pinpointed public coastal accesses along the entire Florida coast from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean in an online Coastal Access Guide. You can choose the access that best matches your interests and needs. The guide provides an interactive map and detailed information about each access—parking, accessibility, facilities, shelters, picnic areas, boardwalks, camping, boat ramps, food nearby or on site and fees.

The Guide to Coastal Access is online at www.dep.state.fl.us/cmp/beachaccess.

FLORIDA PROPOSES WEAKENING TOXIC CHEMICAL LIMITS

Florida's Governor Rick Scott and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are poised to weaken state standards for the discharge of 13 carcinogens into Florida waters. They are also proposing new standards for 34 toxic carcinogens that are less protective than EPA's bare minimum recommendations. This means that the fish we eat from Florida waters could legally become more toxic. These chemicals will come from industries that dump chemicals into our rivers and bays simply to save money.

Most shocking of all is the fact that Governor Rick Scott and his DEP are still refusing to set human-health limits for some of the most toxic and deadly chemicals that are being dumped in Florida waters, such as dioxin and mercury.

It is important for our health, for our children and their future, for our wildlife and for our economy that we stop this plan to increase the amount of allowable carcinogens in our waters. The Clean Water Network of Florida has an online petition that you may sign, letting Governor Scott know that you disagree with weakening water quality standards for these toxic chemicals. To read more or sign the petition, go to <http://tinyurl.com/d6f3vhz>.

Source: Clean Water Network of Florida

LIONFISH A MAJOR THREAT TO FLORIDA'S MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Invasive Indo-Pacific lionfish are a major threat to Florida's marine and coastal resources. Lionfish were first reported off Florida's Atlantic Coast near Dania Beach in 1985. By 2000, they had been seen from North Carolina to Florida. Lionfish are now regularly sighted along Florida's east coast, Florida Keys and the Caribbean.

If you see or capture a lionfish, please report it in the Exotic Species Sighting Form available at www.reef.org/exotics. Include extended details about the fish habitat, approximate size, behavior, and other species associated with it. Indicate if you have photo/video of the fish.

For more information on controlling lionfish in the Atlantic Ocean the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and its partners have created the "Invasive Lionfish: A Guide to Control and management" manual, available at www.gcfi.org.

CELEBRATE EARTH/ARBOR DAY

The City of Sebastian will hold its annual Earth Day Celebration and observance of Arbor Day at Riverview Park in Sebastian, on Saturday, April 20th from 8 AM to 1 PM. There will be lots of activities, exhibits, music, food, wildlife photography contest, plus free door prizes. Watch for local announcements with more information.

Arbor Day is an annual observance that celebrates the role of trees in our lives and promotes tree planting and care. Arbor Day was first observed in 1872 and was started by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska. You can learn more about Arbor Day and find many educational resources on the Arbor Day Foundation website at www.arborday.org/arborday.

APRIL IS FLORIDA WATER CONSERVATION MONTH

April is traditionally the driest month in Florida. The St. Johns River Water Management District has proclaimed April as Water Conservation Month, and many others around the state, including the Governor usually do too.

Rainfall levels are down in most all the counties of the District, but this year they are significantly so in Brevard and Indian River counties.

For information on watering restrictions, water-saving and landscaping tips, and more, visit the St. Johns website at <http://floridaswater.com/waterconservation>.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S GREENDEX SURVEY

You've heard about it for years now—everyone's interested in being green. But do you really know how your personal choices are adding up? What about the choices of your fellow citizens?

National Geographic has partnered with GlobeScan to develop an international research approach to measure and monitor consumer progress toward environmentally sustainable consumption. In their fourth survey that measures and monitors consumer behaviors that have an impact on the environment, they found that environmentally friendly behavior among consumers has increased from 2010 in only five of 17 countries surveyed.

The top-scoring consumers of 2012 are in the developing economies of India, China, and Brazil, in descending order. Those in emerging economies continue to round out the top tier of the Greendex ranking, while the lowest scores are all earned by consumers in industrialized countries. American consumers' behavior still ranks as the least sustainable of all countries surveyed since the inception of the study... while, consumers in developing countries with the highest Greendex scores are the most likely to agree that they "feel guilty about the impact [they] have on the environment," despite having the lightest footprint.

To read more about the NG survey, visit their website at <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/greendex>.

CLEAN WATER ACT VIDEO PROJECT

As a part of EPA's Clean Water Act 40th Anniversary celebration, they hosted a video project asking Americans everywhere to send in a 15-second video clip explaining the important role that water plays in their lives. Selected video clips on our "Water Is Worth It" are featured and can be viewed through the EPA's website at <http://water.epa.gov/action/cleanwater40/>

FINANCIAL UPDATE

January 1, 2013 – February 28, 2013

Balance 1/1/13	\$3825.71 (corrected)
Receipts	178.00
Total	4003.71
Disbursements	378.24
Balance 2/28/13	\$3625.47

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$664.60
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, March 26, 7:30 PM
North Prong Stormwater Park
Ralph Brown, SJRWMD
FSSR
North IR County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd., Sebastian



Friday, April 5, 7:30 PM &
Sunday, April 7, 3 PM
Voices on the Water
VB Choral & Pelican Island
Audubon Societies
Trinity Episcopal Church
2365 Pine Ave., Vero Beach
info: 772-494-5011 or
www.verobeachchoralsociety.org



April 5-6, 2013
**Treasure Coast
Mini Birding Festival**
Cultural Council of IRC & Pelican
Island Audubon Society
www.treasurecoastbirdingfestival.com



April 6-21, 2013
**Brevard Wildlife Corridor
Expedition**
Brevard Nature Alliance
info: <http://expeditionbrevard.com>



Saturday, April 20, 8 AM – 1 PM
**Sebastian Earth/Arbor Day
Celebration**
Riverview Park, Sebastian

Please visit the "Meeting Info/
Events" page of our website for more
events!

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NOTE: The date on your mailing label is the month/year when your dues are next due. Thank you.

APPLICATION FORM

The Friends of St. Sebastian River depends on member support for programs of conservation and education.

Youth (under 18) free — Individual \$10/year

Family \$15/year — Corporate \$50/year

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Special interests, concerns or expertise: _____

Please mail your completed application and dues to:
P.O. Box 284, Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

This newsletter is available on our website and delivery by email for current members. We encourage email-only delivery to save funds and paper! Email us at the address on the front to request email delivery.

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Officers for 2013

President Tim Glover
Vice President Buzz Herrmann
Secretary Gayle Heath
Treasurer Bill Brennan

Directors for 2013

Tom Bauer Anne Putman
Lynn Stieglitz Bruce Zingman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Susan Kearney & John Murphy
Doreen Lynch
Kimberley Maxwell
Atilla Ondi & Sarah Rhodes-Ondi
Diane & Harold Osborne

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Roseland Community Association
Tropical Kayak Tours