



Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284 ❖ Roseland, Florida 32957-0284 September 2016

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.

MARINE RESOURCES COUNCIL LAGOON REPORT CARD AND MORE

Nick Sanzone, Project Coordinator for the Marine Resources Council will be the speaker at our General Meeting this month. He will update us on some of the work the Council is engaged in. The MRC is working on producing a “report card” on the health of the Indian River Lagoon. As you might imagine, there are many complicated issues causing environmental problems for the Lagoon, and the report card hopes to distill the many technical reports and details, into a more useable and understandable format for the average citizen. Making progress to improve and maintain the health of the IRL will take the dedication and appreciation of all of us. This new report will help everyone to understand what the issues and trends are – is the Lagoon getting better or worse, and how we all can help.

Nick will also tell us about their updated LagoonWatch program, which monitors water quality through a group of “citizen science” volunteers, conducting water tests throughout the lagoon. They are looking to expand this program too, so you may be interested in learning more about how you can get involved.

Finally, Nick will also talk about their work on invasive plants and habitat improvement. The Friends has worked with MRC coordinators in the past to remove Brazilian peppers along the St. Sebastian River. We are working on trying to coordinate work on the peppers along the river once again, and plan to start reaching out to homeowners along the river in the near future, to solicit their help in controlling invasive plants within the river habitat. If you are not able to attend our meeting to learn more about how you can help, feel free to contact us and we will provide you with the details.

The meeting will be **Tuesday, September 27**, 7:30pm at the North Indian River County Library, 1001 Sebastian Blvd., and all are welcome to attend. For more information, visit our website at www.fssr.org or call 772-202-0501.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

October is our membership renewal month. All our memberships run from October through September each year, and are pro-rated, depending on the time of year you first joined. The date following your last name on the mailing label of our newsletter is the month/year in which our records reflect that your membership either did or will expire.

For more information on membership, please see the membership application on the back of this newsletter, or visit our website. You may also renew your membership online using a credit or debit card, via our website.

You are receiving this newsletter as a benefit of membership, but did you know that it is also available in digital format? Current members may opt to only receive the electronic/e-mail version of our newsletter, which adds to your support, and saves us time, money, and paper, although we use only 100% post-consumer recycled paper. Our newsletters are also available on the “Library/Newsletters” page of our website.

Additional benefits of our online newsletter are that you receive it earlier than the mailed copy, web addresses are “active” links and can be clicked on, and you can zoom in to make for easier reading. Be sure and check it out and let us know if you would like to receive the e-mail/electronic only version of our newsletter. And thanks for your continued support!

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY'S NATIVE PLANT DATABASE

Bring birds to your home today by growing native plants. With Audubon's Native Plant Database, you can find the best plants for the birds in your area. Growing bird-friendly plants will attract and protect the birds you love while making your space beautiful, easier to care for, and better for the environment.

The Audubon website, at www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds, includes listing of plants native to your local area, as well as resources and plant nurseries where you may find plants for your yard. This is a relatively new feature of the Audubon website so resource information for our area is sparse at the moment. Two great local nurseries for finding native plants in our area, that are not included in their database yet, are Maple Street Natives at 7619 Henry Ave. in Melbourne, www.maplestreetnatives.com or 321-729-6857, and Native Butterfly Flowers. Native Butterfly Flowers can usually be found at the Oceanside Farmer's Market in Vero Beach, on Saturday mornings, online at www.nativebutterflyflowers.com, or by phone at 321-626-7386.

In addition, the Plant Real Florida website at www.plantrealflorida.org has information for plants and nurseries, with a searchable plant list by habitat types. And the St. Johns River Water Management District has an online database for plants that are water and resource conserving, at www.sjrwmd.com/waterwiselandscapes. Their database includes native and non-native plants that are considered "Florida-friendly." Native plants are considered the most beneficial to our environment and wildlife, but not all non-native plants are harmful, citrus being one of the largest non-native agricultural crops in the state. But we encourage you to plant natives where you can as they will require the least amount of supplemental watering, fertilizers and pesticides – usually none!

Also keep in mind that Brevard and Indian River Counties have summer fertilizer restrictions through the end of this month, and much of Florida has seasonal irrigation restrictions. There's lots more information online and one other website with helpful information is Be Floridian at www.befloridian.org.

AMAZONSMILE

For your shopping pleasure, the Friends of St. Sebastian River is a registered "AmazonSmile" charitable organization. Did you know you can support ours, and many other organizations, just by your online shopping through Amazon.com? You will find a link to AmazonSmile on the homepage of our website, which automatically donates a small percentage of your online purchases through Amazon, to the Friends. And Christmas is just around the corner, so there is no better time to start your holiday shopping!

ST. SEBASTIAN RIVER PRESERVE STATE PARK TO REMOVE INVASIVE PLANTS

At our May General Meeting, presenter Tracey Wright had an exciting announcement for attendees. The St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park had just received notice that they were awarded a grant from the state, to conduct a major invasive plant removal effort for the South Prong of the St. Sebastian River. The work, expected to start in the next few months and be completed by the beginning of next summer, will include the removal of all Category I and II invasive exotic plants in the vicinity of the San Sebastian Springs development, and the entire west shore of the South Prong of the river, north of route 512. A description and list of Category I and II plants in Florida can be found on the website of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council at www.fleppc.org.

This is a major undertaking and we are excited for the habitat improvement it will provide for the river. It does not though address invasive plants on most of the eastern shore of the St. Sebastian River and we are working on coordinating efforts with local homeowners to solicit their assistance. The project does not though address the need to follow up and be vigilant for regrowth of invasive plants within the work area, so we hope to work with the Park to help monitor and limit this from happening. If you are interested in helping with any of these efforts, please let us know!

SEBASTIAN SEWER CONVERSION UPDATE

The Indian River Lagoon Council, which now oversees the administration of the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program, chose projects for its first distribution of funding under the revamped Program. The City of Sebastian received \$100,000—one of the largest grants, for its septic to sewer conversion project.

The Indian River County Utilities Department has been working with the City to prioritize locations where the sewer conversion is most needed and will have the most immediate impact on the Indian River Lagoon and the St. Sebastian River. That area includes Indian River Drive, and the north part of the county in the vicinity of the hospital.

IRC Utilities Director Vincent Burke gave an update on the project at the Sebastian Natural Resource Board meeting in early August, describing the details of the research. A few items of note from his presentation: Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) removes about 98% of phosphates and about 94% of nitrogen from effluent, whereas standard septic systems only remove about 30% of each. They have also been working to identify the least-cost options for those choosing to hook up to the county sewer service.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AWARD

This award is given annually by the Friends to an individual or business that has enhanced the environmental quality of the St. Sebastian River area, by one of the following criteria: 1) Landscaping, 2) Water quality projects, 3) Open land conservation, or 4) Erosion control. If you know of someone or a business in our area that you believe qualifies, please let us know. More details, as well as an application form, can be found on the “About Us” page of our website. You may also leave us a message at 772-202-0501. Nominations need to be received by October 31st.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, September 17, 2016
International Coastal Cleanup
www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/international-coastal-cleanup
Indian River County—KIRB,
www.kirb.org or 772-226-7738
Brevard County—KBB,
www.keepbrevardbeautiful.org or
321-631-0501



Saturday, September 24, 9am– 1pm
National Estuaries Day
Environmental Learning Center
255 Live Oak Dr., Vero Beach
Info: www.discoverelc.com or
772-589-5050



Saturday, September 24, 10am—
3pm
National Estuaries Day
Marine Resources Council
3275 Dixie Hwy NE (US 1)
Palm Bay
Info: www.mrcirl.org or
321-725-7775



Tuesday, September 27, 7:30pm
**MRC Lagoon Report Card/
Lagoon Watch, etc.**
FSSR
North Indian River County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd.
Info: www.fssr.org or
772-202-0501



Monday, October 10, 6pm
The Trail of Trees
Tim Womick
North Indian River County Library
1001 Sebastian Blvd.
Info: www.pelicanislandaudubon.org
or 772-567-3520

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

Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284

Roseland, Florida 32957-0284



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.

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

Officers for 2016

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

Directors for 2016

Tom Bauer Mark Bondy
Jane Schnee Lynn Stieglitz
Bruce Zingman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CORPORATE SPONSORS

About Storage
Roseland Community Association
Tropical Kayak Tours