

FROM THE OFFICE OF
GOVERNOR
RON DESANTIS

@GOVRONDESANTIS | WWW.FLGOV.COM | 850-717-9282 | MEDIA@EOG.MYFLORIDA.COM

For Immediate Release
May 7, 2019

Contact: Governor's Press Office
(850) 717-9282
Media@eog.myflorida.com

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Governor Ron DeSantis and Environmental Leaders Reflect on Historic Investment in Everglades Restoration and Water Resources

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis and environmental leaders reflected on the Florida Legislature's work in providing historic funding toward Everglades restoration and Florida's water resources.

"During my Inauguration, I resolved to work with lawmakers to leave our state better than we found it. This session marks a monumental chapter in Florida history and I thank the Legislature for working with me – particularly in funding our Everglades and water resources," **said Governor DeSantis**. "Since day one, I have been relentless in calling for this funding and I will continue to do so. We cannot let up when it comes to restoring the Everglades and protecting our water."

On Governor DeSantis' second full day in office, he issued Executive Order 19-12 (Achieving More Now for Florida's Environment), implementing major reforms to ensure the protection of Florida's environment and water quality. The order included a commitment to secure \$2.5 billion over the next four years for Everglades restoration and protecting our water resources, including \$625 million this first year.

Acting upon Governor DeSantis' recommendations, the Florida Legislature appropriated an amount that will far exceed this first year's goal of \$625 million. Major highlights include record funding in Everglades restoration and significant funding for targeted water quality improvements, alternative water supply and combating harmful algal blooms.

Below is what environmental stakeholders are saying about this historic investment:

“We congratulate Governor DeSantis and the Florida Legislature on the environmental funding achievements of the 2019 Legislative Session. Providing \$50 million to the Northern Everglades Estuary Protection Program aids in addressing the much-needed water storage opportunities north of Lake Okeechobee. Additionally, funding coastal resilience strategies will lead to the inclusion of natural solutions in protecting our coasts from sea level rise,” **said Temperince Morgan, Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy.**

“The people of Florida have long made clear their demands for Everglades restoration and clean water, but the difference this time was the principled leadership of Governor DeSantis and the Florida legislature. Their single-minded dedication to these objectives has resulted in a historic commitment to Florida’s environment that will reap rewards for generations to come,” **said Eric Eikenberg, CEO of the Everglades Foundation.**

“Audubon is glad to see the Legislature respond so favorably to the appropriations requested by the Governor for water quality and Everglades restoration. This funding will help us protect the River of Grass for wildlife and clean drinking water for South Florida. It will help restore North Florida’s springs, and chip away at the nutrients driving harmful algal blooms. Our watersheds need help, and these appropriations are a meaningful step in the right direction,” **said Julie Wraithmell, Executive Director of Audubon Florida.**

“We are grateful for a historic level of support demonstrated by this year’s state legislature and Governor DeSantis for addressing significant environmental challenges to our coastal marine environment. Mote Marine Laboratory welcomes the opportunity to serve in a leadership role for the Florida Red Tide Mitigation & Technology Development Initiative and the Coral Disease Response & Restoration Initiative, in partnership with a number of our partners. Both initiatives provide vital funding for science-based solutions to these threats that negatively affect our state’s environment, economy, and way of life,” **said Dr. Michael P. Crosby, President and CEO of Mote Marine Laboratory.**

“This is great news. Less than 48 hours after taking office, Governor DeSantis signed an executive order that laid out a bold vision to improve water quality and restore the environment. Today we celebrate the Governor’s leadership in securing historic funding for Florida’s environment and water quality. Governor DeSantis’ focus on sound science and investment in our water resources is a win for our communities, economy and way of life. Floridians from all walks of life agree that protecting Florida’s water resources is a top priority, and the South Florida Water Management District is working diligently to move water quality projects forward to fulfill Governor DeSantis’ vision,” **said Chauncey Goss, Chairman of the South Florida Water Management District.**

“The historic funding for Everglades restoration and water quality from the 2019 Legislative session will provide the necessary resources for our state agencies to expedite critical projects such as the EAA Reservoir. Florida is the Fishing Capital of the World. Investments in Everglades restoration and water quality initiatives will ensure

healthy estuaries and productive fisheries for future generations,” **said Captain Daniel Andrews, Executive Director of Captains for Clean Water.**

“The Everglades and coastal estuaries have been in desperate need of the right person to stand up for them, bucking the status quo and fighting like Florida’s very life depended on it. Governor DeSantis asked for record funding for the environment, and the Legislature delivered. Along with an impressive list of executive actions, this year’s budget increase of nearly \$700 million signals to all Floridians that we have a Governor who will not shrink from the enormity of the task. Our sincere thanks go out to Governor DeSantis and team for setting their goals very high, and then exceeding them during this year’s legislative session,” **said Kimberly Mitchell, Executive Director of the Everglades Trust.**

“The State is designating significant funding toward water quality enhancement programs, state and local public health and regional projects as a part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. With the leadership of the Governor and Legislature this year we should see substantial benefits to protect and restore Florida’s waters,” **said Mark Perry, CEO of the Florida Oceanographic Society.**

“We are grateful to the Florida Legislature for their strong support of Gov. DeSantis’ bold environmental vision and for allocating historic funding to address Everglades restoration and Florida’s water quality, which are critical to the state’s more than four million anglers and its \$6.8 billion sportfishing industry. This significant commitment by our state’s leadership will ensure that recreational anglers have clean waters, abundant fisheries and access to both, and that Florida remains the ‘Fishing Capital of the World’,” **said Kellie Ralston, Southeast Fisheries Policy Director for the American Sportfishing Association.**