



LAUDERTRAC

WATERWAY QUALITY UPDATE FORT LAUDERDALE

Tracking Progress on Commission Priorities for 2020



August 2020

IMPROVING OUR WATERWAYS

Waterway quality was identified as one of the top priorities for the City Commission in 2020. The priority aligns with the City's Five-Year Strategic Plan to build a healthy and engaging community by taking steps to improve our waterways and protect and preserve our natural environment.



City Focused on Algal Bloom Prevention

Algae are a diverse group of aquatic organisms that live in freshwater, saltwater or mixed "brackish" water. They occur naturally in the environment and play an important role in ecosystems, serving as the beginning of the food chain for aquatic life and producing much of the earth's oxygen.

Under certain conditions (high water temperatures, abundant sunlight, and excessive nutrients from stormwater runoff), some species of algae can multiply uncontrollably forming large masses or blooms. Algal blooms can smother the water's surface, block sunlight, and deplete oxygen from the water, harming fish and marine life. In extreme cases (less than one percent), algal blooms can produce toxins that may be potentially harmful to people, pets, and the environment.



Waterways are inspected monthly throughout the year as part of the City's Algal Bloom Monitoring Plan. During peak algal bloom season (July to October), inspections increase to bi-weekly at 14 locations where conditions are typically conducive to algal bloom formation, including sites where algal blooms have previously formed and potential sites which follow the flow of the New River.



If an algal bloom is discovered, the City will conduct weekly inspections and work cooperatively with experts from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) on monitoring, reporting, and mitigation.

The City's ongoing initiatives to prevent algal blooms include identifying and reducing sources of pollutant discharges into local waterways, and educating neighbors about ways to reduce stormwater runoff and nutrient pollution. Neighbors are encouraged to use lawn and garden products sparingly; follow the City Ordinance prohibiting fertilizer use from June 1 - September 30; never dispose of or blow trash, lawn clippings or yard waste into streets, storm drains, or waterways; dispose of household hazardous waste properly; maintain swale areas for proper drainage and retention; sweep paved surfaces instead of hosing them down; xeriscape with native, drought and pest resistant plants; and pick up and properly dispose of pet waste.



Algal blooms may be reported to the FDEP by calling 855-305-3903 or visiting floridadep.gov/AlgalBloom. For details about stormwater pollution prevention, visit bit.ly/2zm0UTl. For details about Florida-friendly fertilizer use, visit <https://bit.ly/3dRRbTA>.

NEWS AND NOTES

WATERWAY RESTORATION PROGRESSING



George English Lake

Wood Environmental & Infrastructure continues restoration activities in George English Lake. Laboratory analysis of sediment samples collected indicate that the majority of debris and sediments from the sewer line breaks that occurred in early 2020 are contained within a turbidity curtain near the stormwater outfall on the east side of the lake. Wood Environmental & Infrastructure has developed a scope of work focusing on the methodologies that will be used for sediment and debris removal. Permit applications were submitted to regulatory agencies, including the Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). All of the applications have been reviewed and approved by the respective agencies and the permits have been issued. With the permits in place, discussions will begin on the next phase of the project related to sediment removal. Wood Environmental & Infrastructure has submitted a draft summary report of Phase 1 activities to the City which is currently under review. For more details, visit www.fortlauderdale.gov/waterwayrestoration.



Tarpon River

E-Sciences continues to make progress evaluating waterway conditions in the area of the Tarpon River impacted by sewer line breaks that occurred in December 2019. Based on laboratory analysis of sediment core samples, E-Sciences has determined that the area of impact from the sewer line breaks in the Tarpon River is approximately 100 feet west and 600 feet east of NW 9th Avenue. A draft assessment report was submitted to the City for review in early July. According to the report, "A visual layer of sediment associated with the December 2019 event was not observed in the core samples." Additional laboratory analysis for sucralose and caffeine indicated a small impacted area within the first six inches of the sediment core samples that encompasses approximately 400 linear feet near the points of entry. E-Sciences completed a benthic resources survey which indicated that no seagrasses were observed in the study area, and that the structure and composition of the riverbed was consistent with a typical river system. Based on the limited size of the impacted area and negligible depth of residual solids, which have shown no visible signs of water quality degradation, the City is evaluating the appropriate course of action to follow in consultation with the Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department. The final assessment report is expected to be completed by the end of next month. For more details, visit www.fortlauderdale.gov/waterwayrestoration.

GET INFORMATION AND UPDATES



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