



LAUDERTRAC

WATERWAY QUALITY UPDATE FORT LAUDERDALE

Tracking Progress on Commission Priorities for 2020



November 2020

IMPROVING OUR WATERWAYS

Miami Waterkeeper Water Quality Monitoring

As Fort Lauderdale continues a path of building a healthy community and improving water quality, the City recently committed to a water quality monitoring service agreement with Miami Waterkeeper, a South Florida-based non-profit and leader in clean water advocacy. The agreement requires Miami Waterkeeper to perform weekly water quality testing across key waterway recreational areas over a 12-month period. Weekly results will be posted online at www.theswimguide.org, using an easy-to-understand method. Results may also be downloaded via the program's mobile device app.



Photo from Miami Waterkeeper

Weekly reports will follow the same format and criteria scheme used by the Florida Healthy Beaches program to assess recreational water quality (www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/beach-water-quality/index.html):

● Good ("green")	=	0-35 Enterococci per 100 milliliters of marine water (0-35 MPN – most probable number)
● Moderate ("yellow")	=	36-70 Enterococci per 100 milliliters of marine water (36-70 MPN)
● Poor ("red")	=	71 or greater Enterococci per 100 milliliters of marine water (>71 MPN)

The most probable (MPN) unit of measure is a statistical method used to estimate the viable numbers of bacteria in a sample and estimates bacterial cells in water.

Miami Waterkeeper uses the described criteria as a reporting standard to gauge risk of exposure to water while swimming and recreating. Weekly sampling is expected to take place at each of the City's designated Watersports Activity Areas and six additional sites on other water bodies used for recreational purposes. Samples will be collected and processed each Tuesday and posted online the very next day. Sampling is expected to begin in December 2020.

Proposed Water Sampling Sites

1. Sand Bar (Sampled from SE 10 Street)
2. Lake Sylvia (Sampled from parking area at the end of Harbor Beach Parkway)
3. Middle River (Sampled at George English Park kayak launch)
4. Sunrise Bay (Sampled from Birch State Park)
5. Sweeting Park (North Fork of the New River)
6. Coontie Hatchee Park (South Fork of the New River)
7. Tarpon River (Sampled at SE 9 Avenue Bridge or from an alternative (ALT) sampling location at South Rio Vista Boulevard)
8. Himmarshee Canal (Sampled at Las Olas Boulevard)
9. Royal Palm Drive (Sampled at Las Olas Boulevard)
10. Annie Beck Park (Sampled at the waterway stairs)



Clean-Waterway Efforts are Underway

The City of Fort Lauderdale's waterways have been progressively affected by both point (such as sewer pipe breaks) and non-point source (NPS) discharges (such as fertilizers, pesticides, oil, pet waste, lawn clippings, detergents, and other contaminants). The City has taken aggressive steps to address and reduce the potential of both type of discharges. While expectations are set for the waterway quality to return to baseline conditions, NPS discharges continue from stormwater runoff, tides, and a variety of human and wildlife activities. The City continues to overcome the described challenges through educational pollution prevention outreach campaigns and dredging pollutant sediment at the base of certain waterways.

Additionally, specific projects are being planned by City staff to address any NPS discharge pollutants that may have settled gradually. Listed below are efforts currently being pursued to improve water quality for the benefit of our residents and visitors as well as local wildlife.



George English Lake

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has recently issued an Environmental Resources Permit that will enable the City to perform potential pollutant-sediment removal, at the base of the George English Lake. The City is exploring the use of existing municipal contracts to procure a contractor to perform the sediment removal. The sediment-removal work is expected to start within quarter one of the 2021 calendar year.



Tarpon River

E-Sciences, an independent environmental evaluation contractor, completed an assessment of the point of entry of the Tarpon River that was impacted by sewer line breaks in December 2019. A visual layer of sediment was not observed in the core samples taken by E-Sciences. Additionally, E-Sciences reported no visual evidence of any impact to the area resulting from the December 2019 event. The City is processing a change order with E-Sciences that will include a sediment removal plan and the necessary permits for sediment removal. The sediment-removal work for the Tarpon River is expected to begin in spring of 2021.



Himmarshee Canal

The City conducted a kickoff meeting with E-Sciences for an evaluation of the Himmarshee Canal. Assessment work began in November and once it is completed, staff will address the findings accordingly.

Get information and updates



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

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