

represented. Despite representing to the public that the vote would take place in “early fall”, the ERC vote was pushed forward to July 26, the same day as a much-publicized meeting on the outflows from Lake Okeechobee devastating Florida’s estuaries. The conflicting meetings will limit the attendance of environmentalists and community stakeholders—many of whom will be attending the Okeechobee hearing—at the ERC deliberation. Finally, none of the three workshops that DEP held about the rule change were located south of Stuart, effectively preventing the participation of South Floridians in the decision-making process.

Floridians simply deserve better.

The proposed rule change would have dramatic effects on the lives of Floridians. We respectfully request that you do not adopt the proposed rule, and:

- 1) Postpone the ERC meeting until representatives are appointed to fill the required “Environment” and “Local Government” seats on the ERC;
- 2) Direct FDEP to hold public meetings in South Florida to enable participation from all of Florida’s citizens;
- 3) Reopen and extend the formal public comment process to allow for greater citizen engagement;
- 4) Utilize the most conservative models to protect public and environmental health, and our seafood and tourism industries.

We look forward to your rapid response and action on this issue.

Sincerely,

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