



SAVE LAKE WEIR NEWSLETTER

Save Lake Weir Association is dedicated to protecting Lake Weir and committed to public awareness of lake management

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Jane Sands, President
Vic Knoblock, Vice President

Reese Bourgeois, Secretary
Cliff Forrester, Treasurer

Annual Membership Meeting Sunday, February 23, 2020, 2:00 PM

The annual meeting will be held at the Lake Weir Yacht Club, 13830 SE 145th Avenue Rd, East Lake Weir. The Yacht Club is located 2.5 miles east of Ocklawaha. Turn west off of CR 25 on SE 139th Place and drive to the end of the road. Dessert will be served at 2:00 pm. The meeting will start approximately at 2:30 pm. Board of Directors for the coming year will be elected. Members are encouraged to bring to the Board of Director's attention their concerns and anything they feel the board should address this year.

Membership

Your dues must be current in order to vote at this meeting and receive newsletters. Annual dues are \$10 per person per year and \$100 per person for a life membership. Enclosed for your convenience is a return envelope and membership card to be filled out and returned. Life members should use the membership form only to update email, address and phone numbers. Please send in annual dues and update your email address. According to the by-laws, if dues are delinquent more than one year, membership is terminated. We have 13 annual members whose dues are delinquent at this time. You are being sent a courtesy letter this year because we need your support. Some spouses of our Life Members are not members. We NEED your membership in order to be an effective organization. There are a number of new residents on Lake Weir. We need your help in getting them to join our organization as we are only effective in numbers. INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS TO ATTEND THE MEETING – NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!

Recognition of Board Members

Lou Archibald – At Large
Reese Bourgeois - Little Lake Weir
Holly Curran – East Lake Weir
Cliff Forrester – Sunset Harbor
Mayfair Taylor – Ocklawaha

Vic Knoblock - At Large
Kate Murrell - Weirsdale
Jane Sands – At Large
Jane Voge – At Large

Elections

Three seats on the board shall be filled by election each year as stated in the by-laws.

Current board members that have agreed to serve are Jane Sands and MayFair Taylor. We thank Kate Murrell for representing the Sunset Harbor area this past term. Bonnie has agreed to represent this area for the next three year term.

Jane Sands - Jane is a native of Marion County, she graduated from the University of Florida, and taught Biology at Forest High School for 22 years. She has been active in Save Lake Weir since moving to Lake Weir in 1989. She is concerned with the water quality of Lake Weir and is involved in informing property owners what needs to be done to improve the current situation.

MayFair Taylor - MayFair is a native of Marion County. She worked for Equifax in Atlanta as Director of Advertising and Industry Relations. She has lived on Lake Weir since 2005 in a cottage built by her Grandfather in 1948. She is committed to the preservation of the lake.

Bonnie Meyer - Bonnie's relatives discovered Lake Weir in the late 1950's and her parents built a home on the South shore in 1968. Bonnie recently retired from a career in finance at Verizon. She and her husband, Jim, now live in their new home that they constructed on the South shore of Lake Weir. Bonnie's mother, Nancy McCarter, was on the first Board of Directors of Save Lake Weir. Bonnie is excited to assist with continuing work to ensure Lake Weir remains healthy for future generations.

Speaker at Annual Meeting - Kim Dinkins

Kim Dinkins is a senior planner with Marion County Growth Services. Prior to her work with Marion County, Kim worked for a local environmental firm, Hydro Mentia, and before that, South Florida Water Management District. She has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Services and a master's degree in Soil and Water Science both from the University of Florida. Her talk will update us on a project concerning Lake Weir.

Alert! Septic Tank Maintenance and Well Water Testing

March 3, 2020 1:00 PM George Albright Kiwanis Beach 15380 SE 140th Ave. Rd.

Save Lake Weir will sponsor a seminar hosted by IFAS Dr. Yilin Zhuang on proper septic maintenance. This event is open to all Lake Weir residence. She will also offer the opportunity for you to have your well water tested for Coliform bacteria free of charge. Some wells around the lake have been reported contaminated. A jar will be provided for you to bring a sample of your water to a drop off point at a determined date and the county will inform you of the results by mail or Email. We urge you and your neighbor to attend!

Lake Level

In September 1999 St. Johns Water Management District was required by the state to set a minimum flow level for Lake Weir which is 54.9 feet above sea level. This time last year the water level was 52.44 feet. As of January 2020, the level is 53.17 feet above sea level. To find the current water level Google "St Johns Water Management District Hydrological Data," enter Marion County, Ocklawaha River Basin, current water level, Lake Weir at Weirsdale, Station 04720926.

Lake Weir Minimum Flow Level (MFL)

St. Johns Water Management District is required to reevaluate Lake Weir's MFL every 20 years. Field work and surface water modeling is scheduled for completion by the end of 2020. The first involves determining a minimum hydrologic regime necessary to protect relevant water resource values. The second involves comparing this analysis of ecological, recreational, and hydrological information, all of which will undergo independent scientific peer review. The minimum hydrologic regime (MFL) determined for Lake Weir will be the basis for water supply pumping permitting in the area.

A surface water model has been completed, the field work to determine the environmental metrics is being done at Carney Island and the bird rookery at the present. For further information see St. Johns web site, Lake Weir SJWMD Minimum Levels. Scroll down to Lake Weir. If public hearings are held you will be notified by Email.

2019 Save Lake Weir Association Activities

Nitrogen levels have increased 44% in 7 years and continue to increase.

Phosphate levels have increased 70% in 7 years and continue to increase.

Algae Blooms are continuing to occur.

Four committees have been working diligently to inform you and the county government what the situation is and what you and they can do to improve our lake.

Septic Committee

This is the elephant in the room. The algae blooms occurring are a direct result of the high nitrogen and phosphate levels. It was determined by the FDEP study that 17% of the load is coming from 2,081 septic tanks in the Lake Weir watershed. The county owned sewer systems in the vicinity have capacity for additional households. FDEP granted Marion County \$500K for a feasibility study of converting septic to sewer. The results of this study will be reported January 23 and the results concerning Lake Weir will be reported at the annual meeting. We have asked for a cost analysis for setting up Municipal Service Taxing Units of lake front property owners for sewer. We will be asking the county to pass regulations for the installation of enhanced septic systems for all new and remodeled homes in the watershed area and asking residents to have their systems inspected and pumped every 3-5 years. Remember, no phosphate detergents. We are sponsoring a seminar on the proper care and maintenance of existing septic systems on March 3. Please attend.

Shoreline Committee

The committee conducted a survey of the number of beaches that do not meet the Florida Statute which states fifty feet can be cleared if your shoreline is 100 feet or more and 50 % if less than 100 feet. Please inform beach clearing contractors.

76% of the beaches on Big Lake Weir do **Not** meet statute guidelines, many completely cleared.

58% of the beaches on Sunset Harbor and Bird Island do **Not** meet guidelines.

47% of the beaches on Little Lake Weir do **Not** meet the guidelines.

Over 150 beaches on our lake do not meet state littoral guidelines. Why is this important? The Littoral zone influences the movement and processing of materials flowing into the lake from runoff, thus affecting the physical and biological processes in the lake's ecosystem.

Fertilizer Committee

Please use these guidelines to reduce the degradation of our lake.

Do not use fertilizer or pesticides on the lakeside of your property. Lake Weir is in an Environmentally Sensitive overlay Zone in which regulations say do not fertilize within 75 feet of the lake.

If you water from the lake, the water provides the nutrients your lawn requires. If you use fertilizers on the street side of your property use those with no phosphorus, never use fertilizers or pesticides right before rain showers, or those that are slow release.

The FDEP Study determined that the Nitrogen Load to Lake Weir from surface runoff was 16%

Adding a berm to your property will slow surface runoff. Please follow Florida Green Industries Best Management Practices for Protection of Water Resources, a state law enacted in 2002 to protect our lakes.

Water Movement and Flow Committee

Save Lake Weir has requested the county to reinstate new culverts under the causeway at Bird Island for water circulation. Our county commissioner, Jeff Gold, and personnel are looking into the possibility of doing this.

Lack of water flow stymies movement that is grossly affecting invasive vegetation. The abundance of vegetation creates muck that is not healthy for the lake. Robert Lovestrand, FWC Invasive Plant Management, is working on removing hydrilla and water hyacinths from the lake.

The Save Lake Weir Board is planning a trip to one or more lakes in Florida that are currently restoring waterfronts, removing muck blocking surface runoff and other projects. This will take the unity of local citizens, public agencies, and private organizations to help restore our precious resource. Other lakes have received grants and support to accomplish this and we believe we can do this also.