



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0595, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Septic Tank Ordinance Options

Presenter:

Stacie Greco and Shane Williams, EPD

Description:

Presentation on options for a Countywide Septic Tank Ordinance

Recommended Action:

Hear presentation and provide direction to staff

Prior Board Motions:

During the 6/29/2018 board meeting staff was asked to provide the board with information needed to prepare a draft countywide septic tank ordinance.

Fiscal Consideration:

An ordinance would require minimal BoCC staff time once adopted.

Background:

Septic systems are one source of nutrients that contribute to the pollution of our water resources. Newnans, Orange, Lochloosa, and Bivens Arm lakes, Alachua Sink, and the Santa Fe River and Springs are impaired for nutrients. State adopted Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) outline how entities responsible for pollution will reduce their proportional share of loadings to improve water quality over time. The 2019 amendment to the BMAP included load reduction allocations assigned to local governments within the BMAP area. Alachua County is responsible for reducing total nitrogen and total phosphorus loads from stormwater runoff and septic systems. The County's allocation for Newnans Lake is 588 lbs of phosphorus and 5,239 lbs of nitrogen. The allocations for Lochloosa Lake are 365 lbs of phosphorus and 3,720 lbs of nitrogen. The County's allocation for Orange Lake is 94 lbs of phosphorus.

The Santa Fe River and Springs BMAP included the requirement for nutrient reducing septic systems for new construction on lots that are less than 1 acre located within the Santa Fe Priority Focus Area. Implementation of this BMAP has been delayed by a legal challenge that was scheduled to be resolved in September 2019. The legal hearing is currently scheduled to begin on November 12, 2019.

While staff has been following the legal challenge of the Santa Fe River and Springs BMAP, we have been leading by example at Poe Springs County Park. The septic system at the lodge has been upgraded to a nutrient reducing system

and the concession stand system is scheduled to be retrofitted in November through grant funds provided by the Suwannee River Water Management District. Water quality monitoring is occurring at both retrofit sites.

Letters were sent from the County Manager's Office on October 5, 2018 to the nine City Managers offering EPD staff to meet to discuss proposed new water quality initiatives including a countywide septic tank ordinance. To date, EPD staff has met with all municipalities that responded to the request (Alachua, Archer, Lacrosse, and Newberry). The Rural Concerns Advisory Committee was briefed at their October 17, 2018 meeting and a detailed follow up presentation was provided on October 15, 2019.