

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2020

Ban Fracking and Fracking-Like Treatments in Florida

- The Conservancy **supports** the immediate passage of legislation that would *ban all types of well stimulation* including hydraulic fracturing, acid fracturing, and matrix acidizing.
- Peer-reviewed literature evaluating well stimulation treatments has grown significantly, and a majority of these studies show risk or actual impacts to water, public health, and air quality from use of these techniques.
- Florida has unique hydrology and geology. Florida's citizens not only depend on underground aquifers for most of our drinking water, but also expect a high quality of life and unspoiled environment to support our tourism economy.
- The state's oil reserves are only about 1/10th of 1% of the total US oil reserves. Further, the quality of the oil in the Sunniland Trend is poor. It is not worth the risk to our water resources to utilize these techniques in Florida.
- These practices utilize large sums of freshwater (in Collier County, an oil well utilizing well stimulation treatments was authorized to consume 280 million gallons of water per year). If recovered, the resulting water is toxic and should not be recycled or reused due to fracking chemicals, brine, and trace radioactive materials and metals.
- The ban of these treatments would not affect routine well cleaning operations, and it does not prohibit access to mineral rights through conventional means.



Protecting Environmentally Sensitive Lands

- The Conservancy **supports** the immediate passage of legislation to annually dedicate the largest percentage of funds in the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to Florida's conservation land acquisition programs. Allocations to these programs, including the Florida Forever Priority List, should begin in 2020.
- Conserved lands provide billions of dollars in ecosystem services and are the bedrock of our tourism-based economy. These lands provide flood protection, aquifer recharge, water quality protection, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and more.
- Florida loses the equivalent of 10 acres of natural and working landscapes an hour to development. We must conserve these lands now before we lose the opportunity forever.
- Florida's willing-seller land conservation programs provide a crucial avenue to provide landowners choices and opportunities for conserving their environmentally

sensitive lands and to provide an alternative to development or other types of land use intensification.

Restoring the Caloosahatchee River and the Western Everglades

- The Conservancy **supports** the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir project to help improve insufficient flows to the Caloosahatchee during dry periods. The final construction contract for the C-43 Reservoir was awarded in 2019, with a completion date of 2023. The Conservancy **supports** and requests the legislature to appropriate funds to expedite project completion.
- The Conservancy also **supports** the development of a water quality treatment component for the C-43 Reservoir (currently underway) and requests the legislature appropriate funds for the component's planning and implementation to ensure the treatment component comes online simultaneously with the C-43 Reservoir.

Addressing the Toxic Algae Bloom Crises

- The Conservancy **supports** and asks the legislature to increase funding to DEP for water quality monitoring, flow monitoring, and watershed assessment.
- The Conservancy **supports** and asks the legislature to increase funding to DEP for development and implementation of water quality pollution limits and restoration plans (Total Maximum Daily Loads and Basin Management Action Plans), in order to address pollution problems in a timely manner.
- The Conservancy **supports** and asks the legislature to implement the Blue-Green Algae Task Force's recommendations to address nutrient pollution sources.
- The Conservancy **supports** and asks the legislature to reinstate the Works of the District permitting program for agriculture in the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie watersheds to help control pollution at the source.
- The Conservancy **supports** and requests the legislature provide direction to DEP to resume rulemaking and adopt updated stormwater standards for new development to sufficiently protect downstream receiving waters.
 - Current stormwater design criteria are scientifically demonstrated to not achieve the 80% minimal pollution reduction standards required in Florida Statutes. This deficiency was recognized by DEP when it began to update those standards in 2008. This update and rulemaking needs to be completed.

Protect Local Government's Authority from Pre-emption

- The Conservancy **supports** the State's authority to implement statutes designed to set the minimum standards necessary to protect the citizens of Florida. The Conservancy also **supports** local government's authority to act in the best interest of their community by adopting regulations more stringent than those statewide minimum standards. Therefore, we **oppose** any form of pre-emption that would prohibit or penalize local governments from implementing regulations more restrictive than State standards.