

BOLD VISION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

February 1, 2019

A BOLD VISION FOR PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget recommends major reforms to ensure the protection of Florida's environment and water quality, which are the foundation of our communities, economy and way of life. Governor DeSantis strongly believes the protection of water resources is one of the most pressing issues facing our state and therefore this budget focuses on sound science to protect our natural treasures. As part of a more than *\$4 billion* investment to protect our environment, agriculture and natural resources, Governor DeSantis recommends nearly *\$1.9 billion* specifically for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Rapid Improvement for Water Quality, Quantity and Supply

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget recommends more than *\$625 million* for Everglades restoration and protection of our valuable water resources. By investing *\$625 million* each year, more than *\$2.5 billion* will be invested by the end of Governor DeSantis' first term. This would be *\$1 billion* more than was invested in the previous four years in Everglades and protecting water resources.

This Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget includes a record *\$360 million* for Everglades restoration projects, a level of funding which will put Florida on track to complete the C-44 Reservoir and stormwater treatment area, the C-43 Reservoir, and 20 additional projects over the next five years. These projects will provide 672,000 acre-feet of storage and remove almost 200,000 pounds of total phosphorus annually, a major source of nutrient pollution. In addition, these projects will significantly reduce discharges from Lake Okeechobee when combined with updates to the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule, as requested by Governor DeSantis in his January 4th letter to the President. The EAA Reservoir project will receive *\$107 million: \$43 million* above the annual *\$64 million* to ensure that we are moving forward with the projects needed to move water south. In addition, *\$40 million* through the Department of Transportation's work program is provided to speed up and complete the final phase to raise the Tamiami Trail, which will restore the flow of more than 900 million gallons per day of water south.

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget supports a more than *\$25 million* total investment to improve water quality and combat the effects and impacts of harmful algal blooms, including blue-green algae and red tide. Specifically, *\$10 million* is recommended for innovative technologies and short-term solutions to address the impacts of algae blooms. This includes the

continuation of DEP's emergency red tide grant program and may also address water quality treatment technologies surrounding Lake Okeechobee. *\$10.8 million* is recommended to increase water quality monitoring, support the Blue-Green Algae Task Force, and to develop a water quality public information portal. This portal will be focused on accountability and transparency, providing monitoring data for all of Florida's outstanding springs and key waterbodies, as well as allow the public to track the investment in projects and progress in attaining water quality goals. *\$4.2 million* is recommended to establish the Center for Red Tide Research within the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and to support the Harmful Algal Bloom Task Force and partnerships for mitigation and technology development with a renewed focus on red tide. An additional *\$1 million* is recommended for the Department of Health to conduct a study on the long-term health impacts of red tide and blue-green algae.

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget also includes *\$150 million* in General Revenue for targeted water quality improvements to achieve significant, meaningful and measurable nutrient reductions in key waterbodies across the State of Florida. This includes *\$100 million* for cost-share grant funds for water quality improvements, including septic conversions and upgrades, other wastewater improvements, and rural and urban stormwater system upgrades. *\$50 million* is included to accelerate projects to meet scientific nutrient reduction goals (called Total Maximum Daily Loads), which may include green infrastructure investments or land conservation to protect our water resources. This funding will support projects identified by DEP, the Blue-Green Algae Task Force and its partners to reduce nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms in our treasured waterways. On top of the investment in targeted water quality improvements, the budget includes *\$50 million* to restore Florida's world-renowned springs. This funding may also be used for land acquisition to protect springsheds and will be crucial to supporting homeowners and local communities as they work with the state to achieve the septic and nutrient reduction requirements of the 2016 Water Bill.

Governor DeSantis recommends *\$40 million* in General Revenue for an alternative water supply grant program to help communities plan for and implement vital conservation, reuse and other alternative water supply projects. DEP will engage local governments, industry, universities and water management districts to identify and research all viable alternative water supply sources and is working to provide an assessment of funding needs critical to supporting Florida's growing economy.

Governor DeSantis also recommends a transfer of 19 positions, composing the Environmental Crimes Enforcement Unit, from FWC to DEP. This will move the investigations and criminal enforcement back to DEP to align resources focused on environmental protection, allowing DEP to address both civil and criminal investigations for the environmental laws that fall under their purview. This will allow DEP to comprehensively protect the environment from criminal environmental actions, while maintaining record compliance and its investment in public education.

Protect our Valuable and Vulnerable Coastlines

With approximately 1,300 miles of coastline, Florida's beaches and coasts define our state. As a leading attraction for Florida's visitors, protecting our beaches is critical to our growing economy. Governor DeSantis' Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget is recommending *\$50 million* in beach renourishment funding to continue to address Florida's critically eroded shorelines. Governor DeSantis looks forward to working with stakeholders and the Legislature

to address additional needs once data becomes available on the most recent beach assessments, including damages from Hurricane Michael.

Coastal communities must be able to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of hurricanes, storm surge and sea level rise while protecting our citizen's quality of life and our water quality and supply. This is why Governor DeSantis is recommending *\$6 million* for the Resilient Coastlines Program within the new Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection within DEP. This program helps prepare Florida's communities and habitats for changes resulting from sea level rise by providing funding and technical assistance and continuing to promote and ensure a coordinated approach to planning among state, regional and local agencies. The increased funding for coastal resiliency grants will also help protect Florida's coral reefs, which serve as the state's first line of defense from storm surge and are a major tourism attraction, and support emergency sand placement to help fortify coastal areas ahead of storms. In addition, Governor DeSantis' budget includes an additional *\$2.5 million* to protect our coral reefs by removing tires and other solid waste impacting them.

Investing in Clean Lands and Air

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget recommends *\$125 million* for the cleanup of contaminated sites with a focus on encouraging redevelopment of these areas once cleanup has been completed. Working with federal and local partners, cleanup and redevelopment of these sites will ensure Florida's new businesses and growing communities can safely develop and our economy can continue to grow. Specific recommended investments include: *\$110 million* for Petroleum Tanks Cleanup, *\$8.5 million* for Drycleaning Solvent Contaminated Site Cleanup, *\$5.5 million* for Hazardous Waste Contaminated Site Cleanup and *\$600,000* for Cleanup of State Owned contaminated sites.

The budget also recommends *\$10 million* for year one of the implementation of the State Mitigation Plan for the *\$166 million* Volkswagen Clean Air Act settlement. This plan will be submitted early this year and the projects will address the reduction of diesel emissions and will further improve Florida's air quality.

A Commitment to Florida's Prized Properties

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget recommends *\$154 million* to protect our prized properties in Florida. This funding will ensure all Floridians have access to enjoy our pristine natural environment, while protecting these unique natural resources and investing in the management of our state-owned lands.

As land acquisition is vital to both our economic growth and environmental protection, Governor DeSantis recommends *\$100 million* for Florida Forever through the Division of State Lands to acquire land with a focus on protecting our water resources for Floridians and visitors.

Florida's State Parks have won the National Gold Medal a record three times for having the best park system nationally. Governor DeSantis recommends devoting *\$54 million* to infrastructure improvements and resource management with the goal of maintaining this high standard, aiming for an unprecedented fourth Gold Medal and ensuring all visitors and residents alike have access to these prized properties for generations to come.

Investing in Florida's Agriculture

The Bold Vision for a Brighter Future budget recommends more than *\$1.7 billion* for Florida's agricultural industry. In order to preserve Florida's iconic citrus industry, Governor DeSantis recommends investing *\$20 million* for citrus research, the Citrus Health Response Program and for consumer awareness marketing efforts. Also, recognizing how important it is to effectively combat wildfires, the Governor recommends more than *\$7.4 million*, including *\$3 million* for wildfire suppression equipment and *\$4.4 million* for road and bridge maintenance to allow for better access for land management and wildfire suppression activities.