



# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

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3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Jeanette Nuñez**  
Lt. Governor

**Noah Valenstein**  
Secretary

February 13, 2019

## **VIA U.S. MAIL & ELECTRONIC COPY**

Mr. Ernie Marks, Executive Director  
South Florida Water Management District  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

### **Re: Water Management District Implementation of Executive Orders 19-11 and 19-12**

Dear Mr. Marks:

Governor DeSantis has made clear that water protection and restoration, accomplished with the highest standard of ethics and integrity, will be among the priorities of his first term. Executive Orders 19-11 and 19-12 reflect these commitments and this letter outlines expectations of how the districts should implement the Governor's directives.

Governor DeSantis is committed to maintaining the highest standard of ethics and integrity. Executive Order 19-11 directs the immediate adoption and implementation of a revised Code of Ethics applicable to the Executive Office of the Governor and to the agencies under his authority. Each agency head must evaluate the current ethics policies of the agency and must either adopt the revised Governor's Code of Ethics or use it as a standard for a revised agency code with license to amend for unique agency variables. All gubernatorial appointees and senior managers are expected to comport themselves with the standards announced in this executive order. Upon adoption of the Governor's revised Code of Ethics by the Governor's General Counsel, a copy will be forwarded to your attention for actions consistent with this direction.

Recognizing the threat harmful algal blooms continue to pose to Florida's waters, Executive Order 19-12 requires districts to review budgets and prioritize available funding to focus on projects that will address harmful algal blooms and maximize nutrient reductions. To ensure that district budgets comply with this priority focus, each district should review its current year budget and submit to the Department a list of projects currently underway that address algal blooms and/or nutrient reduction by March 15, 2019. Further, each district shall identify potential projects meeting these criteria that are not funded in the current year budget. Please identify opportunities within existing resources to direct additional funds toward these efforts. Moving forward, annual preliminary and tentative budgets must be developed with these prioritizations in mind.

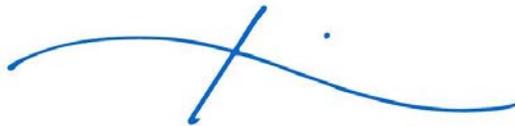
To facilitate these project submittals, the Department has developed a template (copy attached) for reporting to ensure consistency, transparency, and accountability.

Executive Order 19-12 also requires the districts to increase transparency and accountability by providing data and information related to water quality monitoring and investment in projects and project specific information. Districts are statutorily required to report certain project information annually, including progress toward implementing basin management action plan (BMAP) water quality projects. Moving forward, the accuracy of these submittals must be attested to by the Executive Director to ensure that they are accorded the appropriate measure of diligence consistent with the Governor's order.

In addition to the statutorily required reporting, the Department continues to expect the Districts to upload all water quality data collected during sampling events, including results for all test parameters, into the Watershed Information Network (WIN). The Department will be prioritizing transparency of water quality data and project information to be accessible and usable by the public.

The Department is committed to effectively leading and supervising the water management districts as we focus on implementing Governor DeSantis' priorities. If you have any questions about the requirements above or have other ideas on how we can work together to protect our natural resources, please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a cursive-style name.

**Noah Valenstein**  
**Secretary**