

The Indian River Lagoon Council

A Special District of the State of Florida and
Host of the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program



The Indian River Lagoon is a diverse, shallow water estuary stretching across 40 percent of Florida's east coast from Ponce de Leon Inlet in Volusia County to the southern boundary of Martin County. The lagoon, designated as an estuary of national significance, is a critical water body in the state. For many decades, the health of the estuary has been impacted by excess nutrient pollution and freshwater flows.

The Indian River Lagoon Council (IRL Council) & Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program (IRLNEP) provides a non-regulatory, stakeholder-driven, collaborative approach to coastal watershed restoration and protection. The initiative is comprised of federal, state and local citizen stakeholders dedicated to developing and implementing science-based actions to restore and maintain the natural, social and economic assets of the Indian River Lagoon.

The IRL Council is comprised of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the St. Johns River and South Florida water management districts; Volusia, Brevard, St. Lucie and Martin counties as well as the Indian River County Lagoon Coalition. Working through the IRLNEP and its new Management Conference, the IRL Council shares the experience and expertise of representatives from business, government, academia and local communities to achieve long-term benefits and healthy, vibrant communities.

Stewardship Goals of the IRL Council and IRL National Estuary Program:

- Sustain endangered and threatened species, fisheries, commerce and recreation by attaining and maintaining the quality of water, sediment and habitats.
- Improve management of the system by coordinating agency actions and promoting awareness, understanding and sustainable behavior among citizens.
- Restore, preserve and enhance the Indian River Lagoon by identifying and cultivating long-term funding for prioritized projects and programs.

The IRL Council agreed unanimously to share three recommendations with Governor Scott and the Florida Legislature in 2016:

Recommendation #1:

Support the IRL Council Interlocal Agreement by providing annual funding as proposed in the budgets of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, St. Johns River Water Management District and South Florida Water Management District

Recommendation #2:

Support a science-based, comprehensive and long-term program to restore and sustain the IRL

Recommendation #3:

Request expanded federal funding for the U.S. EPA National Estuary Program, with increased funding for national estuaries with urgent needs.

Legacy for the Indian River Lagoon

The lagoon supports a multitude of industries and activities, from fishing and recreation to tourism and agriculture. Restoration efforts are now underway. Recent

evaluation of water quality and events indicate that the Indian River Lagoon is in need of comprehensive planning, strategic actions and a sustained investment to ensure its environmental and economic health.

The IRLNEP answers the call to action and is leading the effort to promote awareness and protect this state and national treasure.



Quick Facts about the Five-County Indian River Lagoon Region

- Nationally recognized as part of the longest barrier island system in the United States
- Occupies approximately one third of Florida's east coast
- Encompasses three water bodies: Indian River, Banana River and Mosquito lagoons
- Contains high biological diversity of plants and animals
- Home to more than 1.65 million residents
- Generates more than \$3.77 billion annually and provides 15,000+ jobs as a proven economic value for Florida

IRLNEP Council Members

Ed Fielding (Chairman)
Martin County Commission

Curt Smith (Vice Chair)
Brevard County Commission

Chris Dzadoovsky (Secretary)
St. Lucie County Commission

Drew Bartlett
Florida Department of Environmental
Protection

Doug Bournique
Governing Board Member
St. Johns River Water Management
District

Kevin Powers
Governing Board Member
South Florida Water Management
District

Doug Daniels
Volusia County Council

Richard Gillmor
Mayor, City of Sebastian
Indian River County Lagoon Coalition

IRL Council Staff

Duane E. De Freese, Ph.D.
IRL Council Executive Director

Belhaim "Frank" Sakuma, Jr.
IRL Council Chief Operating Officer

IRL Council Advisory Members

Chris Thomas, U.S. EPA

Jennifer DiMaio, U.S. EPA

IRLNEP Contact

Duane E. De Freese, Ph.D.
Executive Director IRL Council &
IRL National Estuary Program
1235 Main Street
Sebastian, FL 32958
Email: ddefreese@irlcouncil.org
Mobile: 321-313-0764

