

SAVE OUR LAKES ORGANIZATION, INC.
P. O. BOX 185
KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FL 32656



SAVE OUR LAKES ORGANIZATION, INC.
POSITION STATEMENT – August 28, 2017
RE: BLACK CREEK WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Black Creek Water Resource Development Project (BCP) is an example of how Florida's water resources can be managed for the benefit of its citizens. The Floridan Aquifer (our drinking water supply) cannot sustain the region's future water use demands at the present rates of withdrawal and recharge. A "Water Supply Plan" (unanimously approved by both St. Johns and Suwannee Water Management District Governing Boards) was developed to determine both the demand and recharge projects needed to provide for the future. The Plan focuses on ways to conserve, reuse and store or redirect excess water. All types of projects will be needed to meet regional water demands.

Many of these projects will mean Florida's companies and citizens will use less water through conservation and reuse techniques. However, the amount of water required to meet current and future needs will require continued withdrawals from the Floridan Aquifer. Thus, the Floridan Aquifer **MUST** receive recharge at least equal to withdrawals in order to sustain itself. Rainfall is nature's way of recharging but, sometimes, the rain simply goes to tide or evaporates with no benefits to the Aquifer. Other times, excess rain and flooding can do harm to lands, property and people. In these situations, **WE** can do our part to promote recharging of the Floridan Aquifer. Projects such as storm water harvesting and management of excess water can play a significant role. The Black Creek Project can contribute to the recharge of the Floridan Aquifer and help ensure its viability.

WHY is it important to bring water to Keystone Heights lakes?

There are **TWO MAJOR** recharge areas for the Floridan Aquifer; one is located in the Valdosta, GA area, the other is through Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva in Keystone Heights, Florida. The low water levels of both Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva reflect the fact that the Aquifer is being drawn down at a greater rate than rainfall can resupply the recharge areas. These lakes are like the proverbial "canary in the coal mine". They **ARE** the early warning signal that withdrawals are outstripping replenishment.

HOW will the Black Creek Project help/work?

The Floridan Aquifer can receive recharge through rainfall **AND** recharge projects. Rain falls where it will. However, recharge projects can direct excess water resources to those areas where the best recharge will take place. The Black Creek Project (BCP) will bring excess water to a major Floridan Aquifer recharge area--Keystone Heights Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva. The BCP will take the excess water flowing into Black Creek at Highway 16 and move that water, via pipeline, to an area just north of

Lake Brooklyn. That water will be distributed in an area that will flow into Alligator Creek, which feeds into Lake Brooklyn then, eventually, on to Lake Geneva. As the lake levels increase, it benefits the recharge to the Floridan Aquifer.

Using *only the excess* water flowing into Black Creek for Floridan Aquifer recharge has been a consideration for some time. Engineering and hydro geologic studies have been done by SJRWMD to determine the feasibility (benefits/impact) of such a project. Study results indicate the BCP is a win-win for managing Florida's water:

- Aquifer Recharge (a win for all of Northeast Florida and beyond)
- Lake Recovery/Community Recovery (a win for Keystone Heights, Clay County & Northeast Florida)
- Black Creek Flood Impact Reduction (a win for Middleburg and the Black Creek community, Clay County, northeast Florida and FEMA)
- Middleburg Recreation Improvement (a win for Middleburg, Clay County and northeast Florida)

As with many issues that face us in today's world, the longer we put off managing our diminishing water supply, the harder the choices will be. As the Black Creek Project, and other projects like it, lead to more efficient management of Florida's precious water resources, Florida and its citizens are the winners. The Save Our Lakes Organization (SOLO) applauds the efforts of the SJRWMD and the commitment of Senator Bradley and our elected officials for bringing the Black Creek Project to reality. We support their efforts in every way.

Vivian H. Katz, President
Save Our Lakes Organization, Inc.
Email: Save-our-lakes@comcast.net
(904) 699-2653