

SAVE OUR LAKES



FEBRUARY 2025 Volume 25, Issue 2

IMPORTANT UPDATES

BLACK CREEK WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

CONSTRUCTION ON THE BLACK CREEK PROJECT IS NEARLY COMPLETE AND IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN RELEASING WATER INTO ALLIGATOR CREEK SHORTLY.

MORE NEW WATER AND RECHARGE PROJECTS WILL BE NEEDED IN THE FUTURE AS FLORIDA'S POPULATION GROWS.

RECOVERY HAS BEGUN! NOW WHAT? RESTORATION!

LAKE GENEVA RESTORATION PROJECT

RECOVERY AND RESTORATION HAVE BEEN THE GOALS OF MANY PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER (INCLUDING SOLO) FOR DECADES!

It's important to note that Lake Geneva is the LAST big lake in the Etonia chain of lakes and receives outflow water from Lake Brooklyn. The last time Lake Brooklyn outflowed into Lake Geneva was **briefly in 1998**.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAKE GENEVA RESTORATION PROJECT IS JUST THAT... **RESTORATION** OF A ONCE BEAUTIFUL LAKE THAT WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED BY 40+ YEARS OF HEAVY FLORIDAN AQUIFER DRAWDOWN DUE TO AN EVER-INCREASING POPULATION'S DEMAND FOR WATER.

JANUARY 30, 2025 LAKE GENEVA LAND OWNERS' MEETING

The City of Keystone Heights staff (James Booth and Drew Bell) along with some great folks at Trinity Baptist Church did a great job in pulling together a Lake Geneva Landowner's meeting on Thursday, January 30th at 7p.m. SOLO board members sent out approximately 450 letters to those homeowners several days before the meeting, along with emails to those on SOLO's Lake Geneva Landowners list. We had representatives from the City of Keystone Heights, Clay County, Bradford County, SJRWMD as well as SOLO's consultant from Adams and Reese at the meeting to:

- **PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE GENEVA RESTORATION PROJECT**
- **GUIDE EVERYONE THROUGH THE ACTUAL PROCESS**

(Continued on page 2)



Jamie Booth

SAVE OUR LAKES ORGANIZATION, INC.

P.O. BOX 185, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FL 32656

EMAIL: save-our-lakes@comcast.net - **WEBPAGE:** www.saveourlakes.org

President: Vivian James — **Vice President:** Chandler Rozear — **Secretary/Treasurer:** Susan Welsh

Board Members: Diane Bennett, Webb Farber, Glenda Harper, Scott Slater, Dr. Pat Welsh

- AND ANSWER OWNERS' QUESTIONS
- SEVERAL MAPS OF THE AREA WERE PROVIDED FOR OWNERS TO REVIEW
- LIVE STREAMING WAS ALSO PROVIDED

The PowerPoint presentation presented at the meeting is available on our SOLO website: www.saveourlakes.org

A very big THANK YOU goes out to everyone who provided assistance in organizing the Geneva Landowners' meeting and the representatives from Clay County, Bradford County, the City of Keystone Heights, SJRWMD, and Adams and Reese for presenting the information so thoroughly and answering landowners' questions.

Thanks to all! *Vivian*

SLIDES FROM MEETING PRESENTATION

Some slides from the meeting with critical information for the affected landowners are provided here. As noted above, the entire meeting slide show is available at: WWW.SAVEOURLAKES.ORG

Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)

- Sponsor- Clay County
- Authority- Florida Statute 18-21.004 (3) (b)- "when a governmental entity conducts restoration and enhancement activities, provided that such activities do not unreasonably infringe on riparian rights."
- Overseeing State Agency- Florida Department of Env. Protection (FDEP)
 - Likely Delegated to Saint Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
- Sovereign Submerged Lands- Owned by the State of FL, Overseen by FDEP
- Advocacy Efforts- Levels of FDEP, SJRWMD
- Limitations:
 - Trees and shrubs shall be cut off at the ground surface or higher
 - Any removal of stumps, root raking or alteration to the soil surface is (strictly) prohibited
 - Vegetative debris from the cutting will be removed from the (lakebed)
 - Access within the (lakebed) for tree/vegetation removal shall not damage, alter the soil surface, or rut the (lakebed)

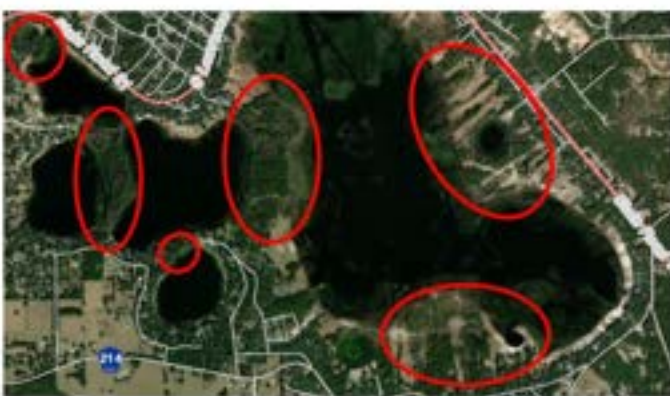
Lake Geneva Environmental Restoration Project (Slide 1)

- Objective-Set conditions for the restoration of historic open water environmental habitat on Lake Geneva
 - Removal of old growth forests that have grown in the lakebed over the last 50 years. Low water levels were caused by water demand on the aquifer from population growth.
 - Removal of vegetative debris from the lakebed where economically feasible
 - Target elevation is **102.9 feet** North American Vertical Datum 1988 (NAVD88)
 - Ordinary Water Level, aka Normal High Water Level
 - Goal is to remove trees and vegetative debris lower than 102.9 feet
 - This would be the area where current trees will likely die as water levels return
 - Some are already dying
 - Restores environment to pre- 1970s conditions
 - Reduces safety risks posed by submerged vegetation and floating logs throughout the lake
 - Maps throughout the sanctuary show the 110-foot elevation in red marker. Ignore the **100-foot** and **110-foot** lines...software issue generated them. They are **not significant to the project.**

Lake Geneva Environmental Restoration Project (Slide 2)

- Landowners with property boundaries on the Clay or Bradford County map viewer that extend below the 102.9-foot elevation can **opt out** if they do not want that portion of the lakebed restored
 - Please get us your contact information
 - Send us an email letting us know if you do not wish to participate in the restoration (save-our-lakes@comcast.net)
 - We will coordinate with the contractor to avoid the property boundaries indicated in the County map viewer system
 - Understand that these areas will not be readdressed later. This is a one-time effort
- The contractor may be able to support landowners who wish to have their private property timbered upland/above the 102.9-foot elevation
 - Please ensure we have your contact information
 - Please send us an email requesting this action and we will work to connect you with the contractor (save-our-lakes@comcast.net)
 - This action would be between the contractor and landowner and not part of the restoration project
 - We are working to obtain elevation data for the 52 parcels of land in Bradford County

Current Targeted Areas



• Rough Timeline:

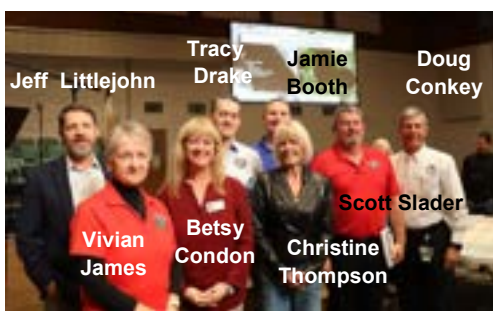
- 30 January 2025- Landowners Meeting
- 7 to 21 February 2025- Clay County Submits ERP to SJRWMD for review
- 14 February to 14 March- SJRWMD/FDEP ERP Approval
- **Mandatory 21-day ERP advertisement in local paper for public comment**
 - Start between 14 February and 4 April 2025
- 11 March to 11 April 2025- Begin Contractor Procurement Period
- **1 April 2025- Early Contractor Start** (Estimate 4-week period of performance)
- 29 April 2025- Early Contractor Finish
- 12 May 2025- Late Contractor Start
- **9 June 2025- Late Contractor Finish**

SOLO WEBSITE www.saveourlakes.org

You can get information as well as communicate with us through our website: www.saveourlakes.org or our email: save-our-lakes@comcast.net. Our newsletter comes out once a month by email and US Mail (usually the first week of the month).

Please feel free to check us out!

SJRWMD GOVERNING BOARD Mtg. 10:00 AM TUESDAY, 02/11/2025 at the Palatka Office
Verify on website: www.sjrwmd.com/governingboard/ (Live Streaming is available)



1/27/2025 DATA (Elevations NAVD88)

Brooklyn Level: 111.6 Ft
Alligator Creek Flow: 13.4 MGD; Level: 111.68 Ft
Geneva Level: 94.3 Ft
S. Fork Black Creek (SR-16): Flow: 55 MGD: Level: 10.8 Ft
Monthly Rainfall: 2.98" (Source: SJRWMD and USGS)



TREATMENT AREA: 1/26/2025. Media in Cell #1 is expected to be completed in the first week of February. Rinsing and testing will follow.

Southern Vegetation Management
 P.O. Box 610 * Keystone Heights, FL. 32656
Jeff Fitts
 Lakes * Beaches
 Tractor Work & Fountain Sales
 352-235-1631
 jefffitts@comcast.net

SEND YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IN TODAY!

SUE PLASTER REALTOR

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION and RENEWAL FORM

(Pls Check) RENEWAL NEW MEMBER EMAIL USMAIL

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER(S) _____

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR ANNUAL DUES CHECK FOR **\$25.00** PAYABLE TO:

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



Save Our Lakes Organization, Inc.
P.O. Box 185
Keystone Heights, FL 32656



Logo by: Graham E. Kestner

SOLO's next members' meeting will be at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, MAR.11th, in the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Look for our meeting signs around Keystone Heights, See you there!

NEWSLETTER PRINTING BY FABCO-AIR. THANK YOU, FABCO-AIR!

FABCO-AIR
A member of Festo Group


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