

# Santa Fe River Springs Protection Forum

August 26, 2018



Bob Knight and Stacie Greco prepare for a presentation

Stacie Greco's Santa Fe River Springs Protection Forum was the highlight of Thursday, August 23 at the High Springs Museum. Stacie hails from the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department, and we wish every county had a similar agency.

The program gave a very good cross section of activities regarding water taking place in our area. We had two presentations on funded projects dealing with springs and sinks which are further studies in the "how to fix our water woes" category. This is typical of how we spend our time and money attempting to treat symptoms of our problems, instead of going to the source. At places in Florida they are trying to siphon off the algae from the surface of the water. It will keep

coming back, of course. We need to eliminate the sources instead.

Yes, easier said than done, but it can be done, and we need to begin.

A couple of up-beat talks, regarding our native turtle population, and the good work of Dr. Jerry Johnston recorded by Eli O'Hearn in film.

Likewise the happy news brought by Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson, ex OSFR co-founder and long-time president, ex Sierra Club and now candidate for Florida House of Representatives District 10. This regards a group of civic-minded individuals called Friends of Rum Island Park, led by Merrillee, who wants to preserve and nurture Rum Island Park, of Fort White, long neglected by its county leaders.



State Representative candidate Merrillee Malwitz-Jipson chats with Jane Nogaki

Three beautiful short videos of Ichetucknee presented and narrated by Lu Merritt, very well done, but which bring a message of pessimism and warning, exemplary of many similar

water treasures of Florida.



Paul Still, also a FL. State Representative Candidate speaks with OSFR President Mike Roth.

Further down we go with the messages of Rich Marella of the U.S. Geologic Survey, describing the water withdrawals in Florida since the 1970s and the definite and constant decline of spring flow in North Florida, presentated by Dr. Bob Knight. Here we see what some water managers have denied (but others not) where the line depicting rainfall amounts since the 1930s travels in a steady, horizontal line, but the spring flow (and sometime in studies, the aquifer) drops lower and lower from left to right.

Continuing our shadow-darkened journey, we see the prediction of the amount of water we will need in future years, discussed by SRWMD representatives Amy Brown and Kris Eskelin. Some believe the district is predicting an unrealistically small shortfall and are not taking sufficient precautions, all the while continuing with the same practices which led to our current problems.



Amy Brown and Kris Eskelin, from SRWMD

So there you have it. If you are taking count we have two happy ones (agenda items) and six less so. But our thanks to Stacie Greco and the Alachua Environmental Protection Department for bringing these up-dates to those interested.

And there are lots of them, because these forums are always well attended.

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

-A river is like a life: once taken, it cannot be brought back-

---