

Lakes' advocates praise the Black Creek Water Project

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Long in the making, this project has finally received its funding. This is a water transfer project, moving water from one place to another to keep lakes full and property values up along with the water levels.

There are reasons to doubt the wisdom and long-term benefits from this transfer, but time will tell if the lakes will now be saved.

See the original article here in [Clay Today](#).

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

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

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Mayor Karen Lake, at left, reads a proclamation thanking the Save Our Lakes Organization for its advocacy efforts to restore the lakes in the region. Members praised the city's efforts to

get the Black Creek Water Project to restore the lakes up and running.

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By Nick Blank Staff Writer

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A tide of red shirted-residents dropped by city council's meeting Monday and it wasn't a flash mob. They praised the effects of the Black Creek Restoration project, which takes water from the oft-flooded Black Creek and shifts it to depleted lakes like Lake Brooklyn.

Save Our Lakes Organization members and residents were out in full force. They told stories of how Lake Brooklyn was, how it weakened and how the lake improved immensely since the intervention from the St. Johns River Water Management District.

"This is the biggest thing. I've used this term before, and it's backfired on me over the years, but this is the greatest thing since peanut butter," said Save Our Lakes Organization President Vivian James. "It really is."

Minimum Flow Levels are units used to describe the lowest level a lake can be. If the water is lower than that recommended level, the lake could be damaged. Lake Brooklyn was usually around 100 mfls in 2010, but that level dipped to about 80. The Black Creek Restoration Project has brought levels between 105-107 mfls, James said. Lake Geneva suffered a similar drop. Now its levels are in the high 90s.

Webb Farber is a Save Our Lakes Organization board member who's lived on Lake Brooklyn for 35 years. He also said he visited friends on Lake Geneva several times. Farber called the lakes a vital natural resource and a "vacation from your troubles."

"I remember the paradise Keystone Heights was with these beautiful lakes, when you drive into town, the first time you see the water, your blood pressure would drop," Farber said. "It

was just a very nice feeling. It is a showcase project for everyone involved. I think everyone can be proud.”

Christine Merriam is a newer arrival and about to be a great grandmother. She called living on the lake one of the happiest times of her life.

“I enjoy it. My grandson enjoys it,” Merriam said. “My hope is this project will keep it going for all of us in the future.”

Kinder Cannon said he had owned a home in Keystone for about 45 years. While he split time in Jacksonville, he called the restoration a benefit for everyone in the area.

“This project is a win-win-win, not only for the residents, but also to maintain the lakes and the economic viability of the city,” Cannon said.