

Michael Roth “Confront source of problems” letter in Gainesville Sun

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Mike Roth

The following letter in the Gainesville Sun, July 28, 2019, by OSFR President Mike Roth references a TV interview in which Rep. Chuck Clemons makes his revealing statements (see [“OSFR President Mike Roth speaks about the Santa Fe on Channel 20.”](#))

As we wrote earlier, Mr. Clemons is a perfect example of the politician without the will, as he dismisses the issue saying essentially, that money will fix it. His will is to put a Band Aid on it and ignore the two essential sources of decline, which is excess nitrate from agriculture (in the rural Santa Fe basin)

and over-pumping.

Confront source of problems

In a recent TV interview regarding the \$100 million allocated to the restoration of Florida's springs, state Rep. Chuck Clemons indicated that he just doesn't get it when he spoke of "plugging the hole in the bottom of our environmental boat" by making sure "the septic tank systems and the other things that are polluting ... our springs are done away with."

What "other things"? In the springs region, agriculture is the bigger issue. We can't "do away" with agriculture any more than we can do away with septic tanks, but spending the money on cleanup projects without exercising the political will to confront the source of the problems won't plug any holes and will waste good money as problems continue to mount.

We are already in crisis. Until Florida's political leadership is willing to tell agriculture and developers what they can no longer do, Florida citizens, and its tourist industry, are destined for trouble. The onus is on the citizens to elect the right people.

Michael Roth, president, Our Santa Fe River Inc.