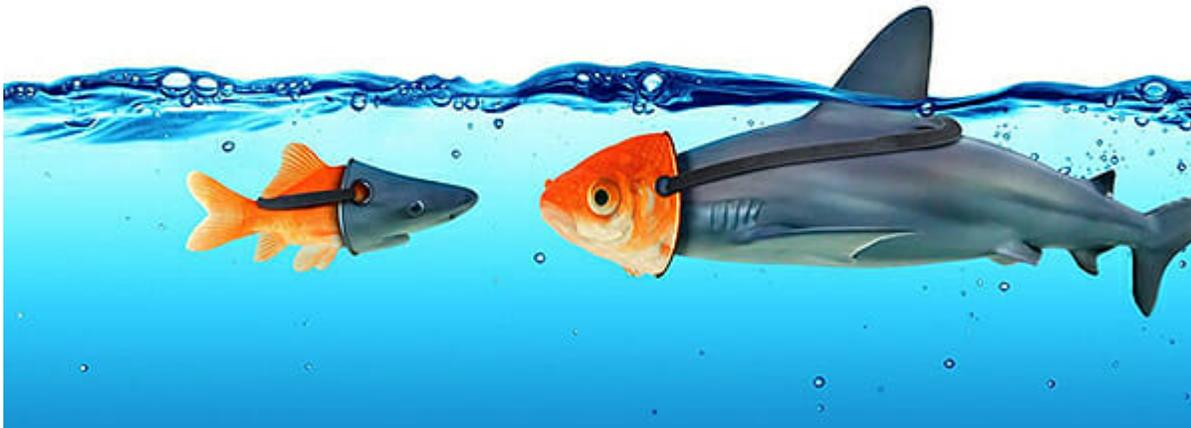


# Misleading Water Article – Fools No One

October 24, 2018



This totally misleading article by Steve Crisafulli is a fine example of politicians hoodwinking the public and making them think our water situation here in Florida is anything but what it actually is.

These articles are carefully contrived, mixing fact with fiction, so they sound good, but they misrepresent the truth. Crisafulli did nothing to help our water crisis when he had the opportunity. He and his ilk may spend money for bandaids fixes that do no good, and they equate spending money as being champions for water. They write that great progress is being made, but the fact is that Florida's rivers and springs are suffering reduced flow, consistently year after year and continuous worsening of nitrate pollution.

Proof that our crisis is worsening is visible with the green

algae and red tide. Not so apparent is the equally severe situation in our springs and rivers, flowing less and less and becoming choked with weeds caused by excessive nitrates.

Those who understand the problem know that the fix entails less pumping and less pollution, principally from fertilizer and septics. Politicians like Crisafulli will not raise the ire of agriculture and developers by curtailing the excesses.

So instead they throw out misinformation to make them look good and make the citizens feel good. And as they do this, our aquifer continues to fall and our springs grow full of algae, and our beaches close to swimmers.

And the tourists stay home.

You fool no one Mr. Crisafulli.

Read the original article here in [NewsPress](#).

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

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

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# **We must stay dedicated to saving our water, environment**

Steve Crisafulli Published 9:01 a.m. ET Oct. 23, 2018



(Photo: Special to The News-Press)

Water sustains our families, economy, environment, and food supply. Although water is our most precious natural resource, it is also the one we take most for granted.

As Speaker of the Florida House, I made water policy a top priority, focusing on modernizing our water laws and investing in projects to address our quality and supply challenges.

Despite the significant progress we made, Florida remains gripped in a seemingly intractable water crisis. Why does toxic algae remain so persistent, and where do we go from here are questions on every Floridian's mind.

Unfortunately, there are no quick fixes. Restoring water quality and expanding supply take time and constant vigilance.

Consider that today, Florida is home to 21 million people. We get 1,000 new neighbors daily. We will have nearly 30 million residents by 2030. That means as a state, we must address our water challenges every single day to succeed. Population growth in Central Florida, for example, means more nutrients trickling down to Lake Okeechobee in South Florida, sparking algae blooms and harmful discharges.

While we certainly face many challenges, much good work is being done.

Further, the Florida Legislature has approved funding for storage projects to hold up to 200,000 acre-feet – 65 billion gallons – of water. Storage projects run by the Evans family, Lykes Brothers, and Alico are several notable examples. The Alico project is the largest and can hold up to 30 billion gallons of excess water annually.

Last month, the South Florida Water Management District issued a permit to move Alico's project forward in the Caloosahatchee

watershed. The district should continue permitting these projects to expand our water storage capabilities.

Additionally, the legislature's policy reforms are working. Landmark efforts such as the Everglades Forever Act provide important funding for restoration and water quality protection efforts.

The statewide water bill and Legacy Florida Act passed during my time as Speaker dedicated funding towards the Everglades and our state's springs, brought consistency to water laws, increased collaboration between local and state water regulators, and set water quality targets in Basin Management Plans for impaired watersheds.

Florida farmers' commitment to developing and implementing Best Management Practices resulted in the South Florida Water Management District announcing a 70% reduction in phosphorus loads in 2017 on farms in their jurisdiction.

Not to mention the voter-approved Amendment 1 directs hundreds of millions of dollars in dedicated annual funding to environmental protection, as well.

Florida's political leaders are the most focused on water in a generation. Our next Governor, Agriculture Commissioner and legislature must continue to make water a top priority.

Much work remains, particularly in the development of alternative water sources and upgrading our water infrastructure. We should continue to work with our farming community, the stewards of nearly one-third of our state's lands, to implement Best Management Practices that will preserve and protect Florida's land and water resources.

Leaders should consider grant programs to switch homes and

neighborhoods from leaky septic tanks onto sewer systems. More funding is needed for water quality and storage projects that remove muck and harmful nutrients and hold excess water. And, Florida should press the federal government to complete Everglades restoration projects under CEPP and CERP.

No matter what community we come from, be it agricultural, environmental, business, or another, we all want clean water. Together, we can make a difference and leave behind healthy and plentiful water resources for future generations.

Steve Crisafulli is a Brevard County businessman and former Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives (2014-16).