

Meeting Date
August 23, 2016



AGENDA	
Section	Presentation
Item No.	I A

AGENDA REPORT
BREVARD COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT:	Congressman Bill Posey Report on Legislative Affairs
DEPT/OFFICE:	Congressman Bill Posey's Office

Requested Action:

Summary Explanation & Background:

Clerk to the Board Instructions:

Exhibits Attached:

Contract /Agreement (If attached): Reviewed by County Attorney Yes No PR

County Manager	Assistant County Manager	Department Director / Extension
Stockton Whitten	Assistant County Manager	



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August 24, 2016

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Stockton Whitten, County Manager

RE: Item I.A., Congressman Bill Posey's Report on Legislative Affairs

The Board of County Commissioners, in regular session on August 23, 2016, acknowledged Report on Legislative Affairs given by Congressman Bill Posey.

Your continued cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK**

Tammy Rowe, Deputy Clerk

/ds

J. A

Legislative Report to Constituents on Our Lagoon

ADDRESSING OUR LAGOON'S HEALTH AND PROTECTING OUR NATURAL TREASURES IS A TOP PRIORITY

The Indian River Lagoon is important to our quality of life and our community's natural beauty. Raising my family along the Lagoon and working in local real estate for many years has helped me to appreciate the importance of our Lagoon for our quality of life, for tourism and the economy, and for our property values. Our estuary also plays a vital role for indigenous and migratory wildlife.



Castaway Point Park in Palm Bay, near the entrance to Turkey Creek, where the Army Corps of Engineers has been dredging.

Collaborative efforts by individuals and local, state and federal governments are essential in restoring our Lagoon's health. Locally, my office has helped coordinate and participate in dozens of informational forums and planning meetings to help address our Lagoon's critical needs. On the federal level, I have worked with colleagues in Congress to advance bipartisan legislation to improve our Lagoon's health.



Muck removed from Turkey Creek is deposited in a nearby spoil basin owned by the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). The water is filtered as it is drained from the basin, and the muck is transported to an agricultural facility to be converted into natural fertilizer.

Speeding Up Dredging and Muck Removal: Working with local leaders and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has led to a mutual understanding on the importance of timely removal of muck from the Indian River Lagoon. Permits for dredging have waited up to 18 months to gain approval by the NMFS, delaying efforts by the Army Corps of Engineers to quickly remove the muck to help revitalize the Lagoon. Recent assurances from NMFS officials could allow the County to bundle permit requests which is expected to expedite approvals to roughly two weeks.

Currently two dredging sites are partially completed – Cocoa Beach and Turkey Creek – and dredging is expected to move forward in four additional sites with more sites being studied for future dredging.

Fighting Algal Blooms: We know that algal blooms occur all over the world. However, experts still have many questions about the root causes of algal blooms and how to fight them. I worked to get bipartisan algal bloom research legislation through the House and signed into law that authorizes \$20 million a year for nationwide algal bloom research benefiting our Lagoon. This new law enhances and streamlines research into the causes of algal blooms and hypoxia events.

Also, I've been an advocate for robust funding for NOAA's competitive research program to provide grants for algal bloom research and additional tools to better understand, predict, and mitigate the effects of harmful algal blooms.



Rep. Posey meets with the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss delays with dredging permits.

Reauthorizing the National Estuary Program: Congress passed and the President signed into law legislation to reauthorize the National Estuary Program which includes my request for continued estuary funding and my bipartisan plan to reprioritize existing federal funds so more money is available for estuaries with critical needs like our Lagoon.

CARING FOR AND PRESERVING OUR NATURAL TREASURES

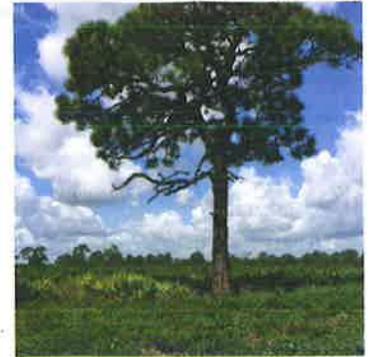
Marine Mammal Research & Rescue: It's common to read about stranded wildlife along the Lagoon, and time is short to rescue these creatures. That's why every year I have successfully fought to restore proposed funding cuts for the Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Program which matches local funding for stranded marine mammal response.

Supporting Volunteers at our National Wildlife Refuges: The 8th Congressional District is home to a number of wildlife preserves, including our nation's first national wildlife refuge, Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, established in



Volunteers tend to a loggerhead sea turtle nest at Archie Carr NWR.

1903. Others include Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and the St. Johns National Wildlife Refuge. These wildlife refuges are natural habitats for many exotic, threatened, or endangered species; among them are sea turtles, manatee, alligators, caracara, the bald eagle, bobcats, the gopher tortoise, scrub jays and pelicans. Our wildlife refuges are also home to critical habitat.



The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is home to a number of species like the scrub jay and the bald eagle.

Over 38,000 people volunteer at our National Wildlife Refuges every year, contributing over 1.4 million hours of personal time to help care for

our natural treasures. I have supported legislation in the House to ensure that federal programs to support volunteer efforts at our National Wildlife Refuges remain active and funded.

SOUTHERN LAGOON SUPPORT AND EVERGLADES RESTORATION

Ten Mile Creek: For years Washington's bureaucracy has delayed bringing online the Ten Mile Creek Preserve Restoration Project. Congress stepped in to advance this project, which will treat storm water run-off before it reaches the Lagoon. Our bipartisan plan empowers local authorities to take over this project to prevent further delays. This proposal was recently signed into law.



Ten Mile Creek Preserve Restoration Project

Repairing the Herbert Hoover Dike: Heavy storm events often cause Lake Okeechobee – and its nutrient-laden discharge water – to overflow into surrounding rivers and eventually into our Lagoon. I recently cosponsored bipartisan legislation (H.R.4667) to expedite repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike to help alleviate further discharges.

Everglades Restoration Support: Redirecting Lake Okeechobee's overflow away from the Lagoon will help improve its health while also naturally filtering this water. I have cosponsored bipartisan legislation authorizing the Central Everglades Planning Project, and I voted to fund the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan which will move this project forward and support our Lagoon.

Also, I joined with members of Florida's delegation in writing to Congressional leaders urging them to bring the Water Resources Development Act to the floor for a vote. This legislation contains funding for projects which are critical to fighting recent algal blooms in the southern portion of our Lagoon.