

# Making it **CLEAR**

The mission of FOLA is the restoration of Lake Apopka and surrounding wetlands



July 2001

**Public Meeting**      **Friends of Lake Apopka**      **Plan to Attend**  
**Tuesday, August 14th, 2001 at 7:00 PM**  
**Tanner Hall—Winter Garden**

Under FOLA’s direction, over the past few months, Land Design Innovations (LDI), a planning firm from Maitland, has been working with staff representatives from all eight jurisdictions within the basin to establish a master plan for the development of greenways, trails, recreation and eco-tourism opportunities within the Lake Apopka Basin. Land Design Innovations will be presenting their initial findings to the public at this meeting and give us a review of the overall project.

Lindsey Benedict, Department of Environmental Protec-

tion, Office of Greenways and Trails is also scheduled to speak as well as Kathleen Patterson, CR 455 Scenic Highway Committee. Updates on other issues relating to the Lake Apopka restoration will be presented.

FOLA remains committed to their goal of providing the public with the benefits of a restored lake and surrounding shoreline. All those who are interested in the future of the Lake Apopka area are encouraged to attend.

For additional information, please call FOLA at (407) 656-8277.

## Message from the President

Please note that the program for our upcoming meeting on August 14 is a very positive and exciting one. We are happy with the progress of our task force and consultants as they put together a conceptual master plan for projects that will be very important to the lake and to the citizens of this area for generations to come. Please plan to come out and support their efforts.

Following is a quick summary of the many issues being considered by your Board of Directors:

1. **North Shore Restoration Plan:** While long-term plans for flooding the fields is still on hold, the staff at SJRWMD have developed an interim plan which now awaits the approval of federal agencies. These include:
  - a. A study which measures bioaccumulation of pesticides in waterfowl with the hope scientists can determine exactly whether birds deaths were caused by pesticides and how they travel through the food chain.
  - b. Continued pesticide assessments for soils throughout the north shore restoration area (former farms). A great deal of data has been collected and is now being analyzed.
  - c. Initiation of some limited flooding of the former Duda farms to assess restoration potential. (These farms have been found to have low pesticide levels).
  - d. Remediation of the “hot spots” of pesticides found near the Lust Airport. Legal and other discussions with DEP are in process.
  - e. Marsh Flow Way: Construction has been completed on the first phase and it is ready for operation.

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### Membership Application for Friends of Lake Apopka

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Fax / email \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer / Interests \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Student or Youth—\$3.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual—\$10.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family—\$15.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor, Corporation or Organization—\$25.00
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron—\$100.00

Please mail this form with your check. Your interest in **Friends of Lake Apopka** is vital to the ongoing restoration effort.

**Make check payable to: FOLA**  
Mail to: Friends of Lake Apopka  
PO Box 770355  
Winter Garden, FL 34777

*("Message from the President" continued from page 1)*

- f. **Dredging:** An experimental study is underway to determine the feasibility of dredging sediments from the lake into the farm fields that are below lake levels in the hopes it will cap off pesticides in the soils and raise soil levels.

FOLA is taking a strong stand on expediting approval of these plans. We are writing many state and federal agencies asking for their support.

2. **Water Quality Studies:** The lake level is now the lowest ever recorded, (up to three and one-half feet below normal). Concern has been expressed that the wind action in shallow waters would generate more phosphorous in the water column than past years but, so far, it has not. Hopefully, the oxidation of the exposed sediments will be very beneficial.
3. **Wasteload Allocation Rule:** Our board continues to push for adoption of this important rule. We have received more data pertaining to the rule and yet another draft rule which we are now trying to understand. We will continue to push for adoption of a rule by December 2001 as promised. Another public workshop will be held soon and we will meet with staff prior to this to iron out our on-going concerns.
4. **Development Design Guidelines:** Local governments have been responding well to our guidelines and at least two significant new developments proposed on the lakeshore have observed the guidelines. Lake County has written a new ordinance based on the guidelines. This is very encouraging!

**The important thing we must remember is that we are no longer dumping tons of fertilizer in the lake, or spraying thousands of gallons of pesticides from the air. For that, each of you can be thanked!**

Respectfully Submitted by Jim Thomas, President

## FOLA UPdates

### Lake Apopka Basin Master Plan

Most of our energies are now focused on our newest project, the completion of a conceptual master plan for greenways, trails, recreation and eco-tourism opportunities in the Lake Apopka Basin. Our consultants, Land Design Innovations, Inc. will present the project at our meeting so plan to be there!

We continue to press for the acquisition of Crown Point properties on the east side of the lake and an integrated management plan for all the associated wetlands.

### Historical Documents

FOLA received some very interesting documents including some old aerial photos, from the closed Zellwood Drainage District offices. We will keep them in climate controlled storage while making plans to display some of them at the Winter Garden Museum and eventually make them available in our ONP environmental education center. We have a great deal of historic data archived, which will be of interest in the future.

### Oakland Nature Preserve

Oakland Nature Preserve (ONP) is Central Florida's and FOLA's window on Lake Apopka and many of its restoration efforts. During the past year the many volunteers supporting the Preserve have increased their effort to over 5,000 total hours invested in the project. Volunteers have included two AmeriCorps groups for two

weeks each, local Rotary, church, Boy Scout, Police Explorer and Chamber of Commerce groups.

Other recent accomplishments include completion of perimeter fencing, purchase of an additional 15 acres of land bringing the total to 110 acres, development of educational materials for our Shelter on the West Orange Trail, and preparation of four acres of uplands for complete restoration with native plants.

In order to achieve our goals of public access and environmental education, the 18 member Board of Directors of ONP is currently planning for a one-half mile boardwalk to the shores of Lake Apopka, an Environmental Study Center, and is in serious conversation with Orange County Public Schools.

During the Fall of 2001, we expect to kickoff a \$1 million fund raising effort to build these facilities. Stay tuned, you will hear from us! Please support the Oakland Nature Preserve with your volunteer hours and donations. For more information, call (407) 656-9692.

### New Appointment at SJRWMD

Henry Dean, Executive Director of SJRWMD, has resigned to accept the same position with SFWMD. Henry has been very supportive of our group since we started eleven years ago (can you believe it's been eleven years?). Kirby Green, formerly with DEP, has been appointed to replace Henry. We hope to have the same relationship with Mr. Green.

Friends of Lake Apopka  
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