

From: **Flagler Beach Salt Marsh** <[flaglerbeachsaltmarsh@gmail.com](mailto:flaglerbeachsaltmarsh@gmail.com)>

Date: Wed, Apr 10, 2019 at 2:19 PM

Subject: Follow Up From Circulating Email- Flagler Wetlands

To: Paul Haydt <[paulhaydt1@gmail.com](mailto:paulhaydt1@gmail.com)>, brynnq <[brynnq@aol.com](mailto:brynnq@aol.com)>, David Hartgrove <[birdman9@earthlink.net](mailto:birdman9@earthlink.net)>, John Baker <[johnbkr700@gmail.com](mailto:johnbkr700@gmail.com)>, Sandi Sites <[sandisites67@gmail.com](mailto:sandisites67@gmail.com)>, Joe Jaynes <[JoeJaynes@cfl.rr.com](mailto:JoeJaynes@cfl.rr.com)>, Mike Lagasse <[mlagasse@flaglercounty.org](mailto:mlagasse@flaglercounty.org)>, Tim Telfer <[ttelfer@flaglercounty.org](mailto:ttelfer@flaglercounty.org)>, Katrina Locke <[klocke@volusia.org](mailto:klocke@volusia.org)>, Chris Schlageter <[oldfloridaconservation@hotmail.com](mailto:oldfloridaconservation@hotmail.com)>, Andy Block <[ablock100@gmail.com](mailto:ablock100@gmail.com)>, Jim Troiano <[jtroiano@sirwmd.com](mailto:jtroiano@sirwmd.com)>

Dear Mr. Haydt,

This email is in reference to your assertions regarding the Flagler Beach Saltmarsh Project group. Since you stated that you were not on FaceBook or familiar with our group, we would like to share with you some information about us. We are not a "small group of private interests" but a very large, deeply concerned group of citizens who care very much for our environment. (please see our petition with apx 2k signatures <https://www.change.org/p/st-johns-river-water-management-district-stop-the-flagler-ditch-restoration-project> )

We realize, given your extensive experience with Dragline Ditch Restoration going back decades, that we will not convince you otherwise, but we would like to present you with the basis of our claims and concerns. We have not used "FaceBook science" to gather our information, but sought the expertise of a world renown and sought after Ecological Restoration Specialist and author. Who better to gain outside/3rd party insight and knowledge from than Dr. Andre Clewell and his assistant, Cristina Raymond, who is a wetlands specialist/delineator, plant ecologist/botanist in Florida who is very familiar with Florida saltmarsh and coastal habitats? His findings are attached for your insight, as well as his C.V. for reference. In case you are unable to read through his lengthy assessment of the Flagler Wetlands Project, here is a brief excerpt "*This is a degradation project and not a restoration project. It lacks fundamental aspects of restoration, such as baseline documentation, a reference model, implementation plans, monitoring, and even a clear statement of project goals. The Tomoka estuary currently represents a sustainable, resilient, complex, and self-organizing ecological landscape predominated by a native tidal wetland biota. Proposed project activities will degrade this landscape without returning any benefits.*"

We fully understand how important Saltmarsh Restoration is, but we are also fully aware of how controversial this specific type of restoration is (Dragline Ditch Restoration). Restoration efforts should be embraced fully by everyone. We should all want to be a part of such efforts and would be, if there was not so much controversy tied to Dragline Ditch Restorations. We have yet to hear from one individual, not tied to the project in any way, shape or form, that has come to us in support of the past restorations in Volusia County. The only ones who say anything positive about those efforts have some part in the project. However, we have heard from countless individuals who have been very clear about the negative effects incurred and lack of environmental lift with Dragline Ditch projects. Their numerous emails to the District stating such are public record for anyone to see for themselves. Stakeholders in Volusia have gone out of their way to join us in our efforts in a hopes that we will not have to experience what they did. If you would like to see more about the comments made from multiple individuals and any further information that we shared, please visit our Facebook Page [https://www.facebook.com/Flagler-Beach-Saltmarsh-Project-237459070277819/?view\\_public\\_for=237459070277819](https://www.facebook.com/Flagler-Beach-Saltmarsh-Project-237459070277819/?view_public_for=237459070277819).

We will continue to raise awareness and press-on in our efforts given our very valid concerns with a project of this nature. We will strongly stress that there has to be a better, less destructive way to restore an area. The funding to do this project is minimal and therefore, you get what you pay for. Why not wait until you have the correct funding to do it right? We will continue to fight for this specific estuary, as well as all those areas targeted for this type of project in the future. **Resources could be utilized to develop a smarter, more environmentally friendly and less destructive method for restoration efforts of our coastal wetlands.** Just because something was done a specific way in the past, doesn't always mean that it is the correct or most effective way, especially when there is zero data on record indicating increases in water quality and productivity of previous Dragline Ditch projects. You should not have to destroy to restore. We have offered the District many alternative ideas which have all been rejected.

The links listed below are a few of the most recent videos that were posted to our Facebook page (you do not need a FB account to view). These videos have reached close to 10k people. Our page has a healthy following and each post we share reaches close to 2k people. We are actively updating Governor DeSantis and will continue to do so. We feel that this needs a full review and overhaul of the methodology being used by the St Johns River Water Management District.

Respectfully,

The Concerned Flagler Beach Saltmarsh Community

**The aftermath section L-1. There was vegetation all through this area. Nothing now. A small glimpse of the significant amount of Storm Protection Loss homes will experience. It's very clear that nothing but "open water" has been created for now and in a storm event we have lost, and are losing more each day, critical layers of storm surge protection.**

[https://www.facebook.com/237459070277819/videos/1020291798181449/?view\\_public\\_for=237459070277819](https://www.facebook.com/237459070277819/videos/1020291798181449/?view_public_for=237459070277819)

**April 3rd. Section L-1. The destruction ensues. Large trees into the water, a bird on the run, and potential natural uplands impacted.**

[https://www.facebook.com/237459070277819/videos/352955935321702/?view\\_public\\_for=237459070277819](https://www.facebook.com/237459070277819/videos/352955935321702/?view_public_for=237459070277819)

Attachments:

[Elevation Report](#)

[Flagler Ecological Assessment](#)

[Clewell CV](#)