

Gov. Scott Provides an Additional \$400,000 to Lee County to Clean Local Waterways

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is providing an additional \$400,000 to Lee County to clean up impacts related to red tide, for a total of \$1.1 million in grant funding. Under the direction of the emergency order issued by Governor Scott last month, DEP launched a \$3 million grant program to help local governments clean up waterways affected by harmful algal blooms.

Last week, Governor Scott directed the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and DEP to enhance water testing, beach cleanup, public outreach as well as the deployment of additional biologists to assist communities dealing with naturally occurring red tide. DEP had previously awarded \$700,000 to Lee County to combat blue-green algae and remove it from various tributaries and canals along the Caloosahatchee River. Lee County will use this additional funding to enhance the county's efforts to clean local waterways from impacts caused by red tide. Red tide is a naturally occurring algae that has been documented along Florida's Gulf Coast since the 1840's and occurs nearly every year.

Governor Scott said, "I am using my executive authority to provide additional funding to allow communities in Lee County to better clean our waterways. We will continue to implement real solutions to help our local communities deal with both the algal issues caused by federal water discharges from Lake Okeechobee and this year's red tide bloom. I encourage more local governments to apply for this important funding."

DEP Secretary Noah Valenstein said, "DEP is pleased to be able to continue our partnership with Lee County to address the impacts of both blue-green algae from federal Lake Okeechobee discharges and from the naturally-occurring red tide. We continue to look for ways to support local communities and focus on both short and long-term solutions to help combat and mitigate algal blooms."

Under Governor Scott's leadership, Florida has expedited key projects to clean, store and move water south in the Everglades to prevent the need for harmful federal discharges from Lake Okeechobee. This includes the Governor's historic Restoration Strategies Plan, the C-43 reservoir, the C-44 storm water treatment area, the S-333 reservoir and the EAA Reservoir.

Governor Scott is also the only Governor in Florida's history to dedicate state funding to repair the federal Herbert Hoover Dike, investing \$100 million in the project.