



Florida Department of Health

Wekiva Onsite Nitrogen Contribution Study

Update for Wekiva River Basin Commission

June 1, 2007



Specific Appropriation 566

- \$250,000 to identify and quantify the nitrogen loading from onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) within the Wekiva Study Area
- Assess whether OWTS are a significant source of nitrogen to the underlying groundwater relative to other sources
- Recommend a range of possible cost-effective OWTS nitrogen reduction strategies if contributions are significant



Progress to date

- DOH will not proceed with rule-making until the study has been completed
- Research Review and Advisory Committee (RRAC) has met eight times since May 2006 to develop scope and select providers
- Final report due June 30, 2007, no conclusions have been reached at this point



Progress to date

- Project split into 4 tasks
 - Field work
 - How much nitrogen does one system contribute per category (WAVA zone, soil type, etc.)
 - How much total nitrogen do septic systems contribute as compared to other sources
 - Provide a range of cost-effective solutions



Task 1: Field Study in Wekiva Study Area to sample actual onsite systems

- Ellis & Associates, Inc.
- Three sites selected, one in each county in Wekiva Study Area sampling of groundwater around drainfields
- Draft report submitted
- Final report due end of May 2007
- Report posted on Department of Health Website
<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/ENVIRONMENT/ostds/wekiva/wekiva.htm>



Task 2: What categories are important to look at to determine loading from onsite wastewater systems to the groundwater?

- Otis Environmental Consultants, LLC
- Draft table posted on Department of Health website: key categories are the soils and how close the drainfield is to the water table
- Final report to be submitted beginning of June 2007



Task 3: Are onsite systems a significant source of nitrogen to groundwater relative to other sources?

- Linda Young, University of Florida
- Work in coordination with Task 2 provider and Department of Environmental Protection and St. Johns River Water Management District provider to create pie chart of contributions
- Final report due beginning of June 2007



Task 4: Recommend a range of possible cost-effective onsite wastewater treatment systems nitrogen reduction strategies if significant

- Study conducted by DOH Staff
- Draft report due beginning of June
- Final recommendations will depend on results from Tasks 1 - 3 regarding significance of nitrogen contribution



Report Timelines

- All task reports due beginning June 2007
- Research Review and Advisory Committee meets June 12 to review and comment
- Technical Review and Advisory Panel scheduled to meet June 21 to review and comment
- Final Report to Legislature and Governor due June 30, 2007



QUESTIONS?

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