



Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

SUPPORT CLEAN WATER

Position Statement
Adopted September 16, 2010

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. is committed to ensuring the availability of water resources that are safe for consumption, recreation, irrigation and sanitation without endangering essential ecosystems.

With over 50,000 miles of rivers and streams; 7,800 lakes; 4,500 square miles of estuaries and bays; more than 700 springs; and one of the highest producing aquifers in the world, Florida has an abundance of water resources of exceptional ecological, economic and recreational value.

Unfortunately, Florida also faces some of the most challenging water quality issues in the nation. Our precious water resources are stressed due to population growth and urban development, hydrologic modifications, drought, saltwater intrusion and the proliferation of exotic vegetation. Additionally, nutrients from excessive use of fertilizers; bacteria from inadequately treated sewage and from stormwater drains; organic matter from debris; heavy metals from industrial discharges, mining, landfills, incinerators, power plants and runoff from roadways; and pesticides and herbicides from agricultural fields, lawns, termite control and golf courses contribute to unsafe levels of pollution. Florida has over 1,000 water bodies considered too polluted for drinking, fishing, and swimming; and Florida's entire coastline, as well as every lake and river in the state, is subject to mercury consumption advisories.

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. appreciates that water is vital to all life, and that water quality impacts the quality of our lives. In order to ensure our access to water resources that are safe for consumption, recreation, irrigation and sanitation, Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. supports the following:

To Reduce Water Pollution

- Reduce point sources of pollution (permitted discharges from sewage treatment plants and industrial facilities)
- Reduce nonpoint sources of pollution (unregulated runoff from agricultural fields and urban areas)
- Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of water-management decisions

To Protect Our Aquatic Ecosystems

- Protect, maintain and restore our water resources
- Define water resources to include watersheds, so that water resources are viewed within a landscape, or systems context
- Develop and implement site-specific Watershed Management Plans
- Improve strategies and protocols for monitoring, sampling and analysis of all hydrologic components, including the atmosphere, surface water, ground water and biological communities
- Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures

To Improve Our Effectiveness

- Provide adequate funding for the protection, maintenance and restoration of our water resources
- Reauthorize, strengthen and fully enforce the Clean Water Act
- Increase scientific knowledge about the effects of nutrients and toxic contaminants on water quality and impact on public health
- Incorporate "best available science" in all models, methods and management decisions
- Recognize the importance of public participation and equity in decision-making and incorporate stakeholder participation in all aspects of water resource assessment and policy
- Promote awareness, understanding and appreciation of Florida ecosystems with outreach programs to educate the broader community