FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
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67 Counties. 67 Communities.

ONE FLORIDA

2026 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

December 2-4

Sawgrass Marriott

Ponte Vedra Florida

St. Johns County




WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY

Water & Environmental Sustainability Committee



CHAIR

Holly Raschein

Monroe County



VICE-CHAIR

Ken Cornell

Alachua County



VICE-CHAIR

Ken Doherty

Charlotte County

ROLL CALL



67 Counties. 67 Communities.

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Reminder

Only members of the committee can make motions and vote.

However, all commissioners and staff can make comments, ask questions, and debate during the discussion of each action item.

WES 01 – Beach Restoration Easements

Submitted by Flagler County

Proposal

Amend ch. 161, F.S., to allow limited beach and dune work on private property without an easement when the owner can't be located or doesn't respond.

Key Points

- The county gives formal notice and a response period (e.g., 60 days). Objections go through the normal easement process.
- If there's no response, the county holds a hearing to value the easement, publishes a timetable, and posts a bond for damage claims.
- Silence isn't consent, and no public access is created. Owners can still seek compensation for damages beyond the project's benefits.

Staff Notes:

- Focus shifted to owners who can't be located or don't respond.
- Currently, the only options are eminent domain or skipping the parcel and nonresponsive owners are treated the same as refusals.

WES 02 – PILT Modifications

Submitted by Glades County

Proposal

Amend ss. 259.032 and 373.59, F.S., to strengthen payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) for land the state or a water management district acquires and removes from county tax rolls.

Key Points

- Adds an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment to each PILT payment.
- Protect PILT in perpetuity. Replaces the Legislature's discretionary authority to appropriate PILT with a requirement to fund it.
- Require the state to remit PILT automatically by July 31, before counties adopt budgets, instead of through an annual application.

Staff Notes:

- Currently, payments are fixed at pre-acquisition taxes, with no adjustment for inflation or property value, so they lose value each year. State PILT also depends on discretionary appropriations and payments are prorated when funding falls short.
- Counties must apply every year and neither statute sets a date by which payments must be made.

WES 03 – Reclaimed Water Service Areas

Submitted by Miami-Dade County

Proposal

Authorize reuse utilities to establish DEP-approved reclaimed water service areas. Require large consumptive use permit applicants in those areas to request reclaimed water and use it when feasible.

Key Points

- Applies to new or modified permits of 500,000 gallons per day or more. Public water supply, agriculture, and aquaculture are excluded.
- Service areas based on an engineer's analysis of capacity, demand, and delivered cost. Utilities keep discretion over whether and whom to serve.
- Optional assessments, bonds, and state and WMD cost-share help fund infrastructure.

Staff Notes:

- Currently, reclaimed water is presumed available only where a utility has spare capacity and lines already reach the site, and there's no uniform process for planning or financing new service. Circular barrier: lines must exist before permitting can direct a user to reclaimed water, but utilities need committed users to build them.
- SB 484 has the same gap.

WES 04 – Five-Year Water Quality Workplan

Submitted by Monroe County

Proposal

Require DEP to establish a Five-Year Statewide Water Resource Project Plan through the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program

Key Points

- Covers wastewater (including septic-to-sewer), stormwater, and other water quality projects, such as those in a basin management action plan.
- Each year's plan carries prior projects forward and adds new ones selected through the existing grant process, instead of starting over every year.
- DEP's recommendations, including a project selection process, are due January 1, 2028. The annual plan begins December 1, 2028, and the act takes effect July 1, 2027.

Staff Notes:

- Currently, projects compete for funding every year, and the amount available depends on each year's budget, even though major projects take several years to design, permit, finance, and build. The Legislature already takes a multiyear approach to resilience projects through the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.

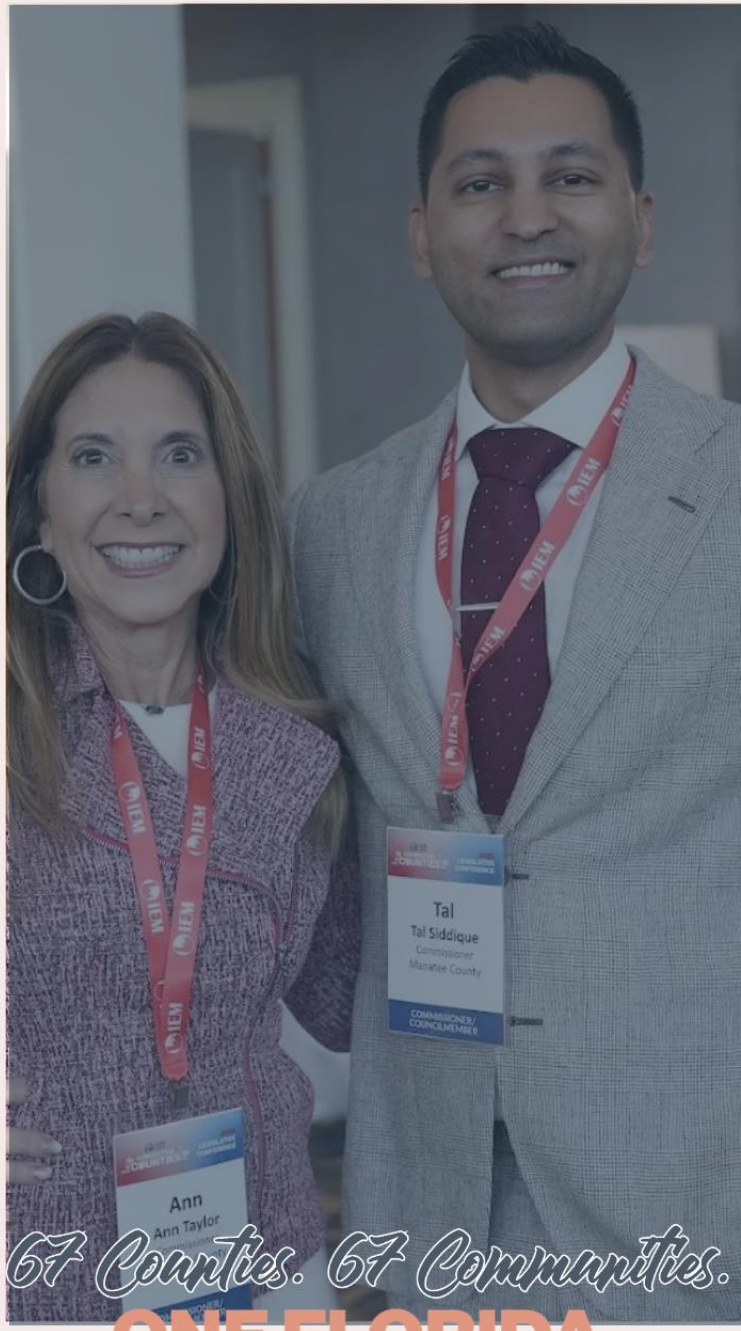
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

FAC WELCOME RECEPTION

5:30 - 6:30 PM

Lagoon Pool / Gator Club

Sponsored by: CONSENSUS COMMUNICATIONS



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

Committee Meeting:

FUTURE TECHNOLOGY

10:45 - 11:45 AM

Champions D-E

Sponsored by: NDA HOUSING GROUP

