

One Charlotte, One Water plan nears launch

By Hector Flores

We have some busy weeks ahead before we move into the holiday season. On Tuesday, the County Commission conducted a workshop at 9 a.m. to discuss the One Charlotte, One Water Plan. Water Quality Manager Brandon Moody presented a status update on the plan, its development, public involvement and implementation timetable.

The One Water part of the initiative's title comes from the U.S. Water Alliance, a non-profit organization that advocates for water quality at the federal, state and local level. Its One Water vision calls for us to manage all water — whether from the tap, a stream, a storm, an aquifer, or a sewer — in a collaborative, integrated, inclusive, and holistic manner.

The county's One Charlotte, One Water initiative has six overall goals.

1. Identify measures to help meet state water quality standards and support healthy, vibrant ecosystems.
2. Support a comprehensive system for monitoring water quality and quantity trends in Charlotte County.
3. Integrate further water quality protection/improvement practices within the county.
4. Support efficient, resilient, and fiscally sound water supply and treatment services to Charlotte County.
5. Achieve and build on water protection goals in the Comprehensive Plan.
6. Establish and outline formal mechanisms for regular public participation in One Water visioning, watershed protection, and the water quality program.

While the plan has been under development, the county has already launched numerous projects to monitor water quality. Monitoring stations around Charlotte Harbor, the rivers and canal systems look for levels of pollutants, such as bacteria, nitrogen, phosphorus and ammonia. It has programs that analyze and track the health of seagrass beds, sportfish hatcheries and water levels.

The plan is currently undergoing a public review period that will end on Nov. 14. Once the plan is adopted by the County Commission, Moody has a post-adoption plan create a long-term steering committee and enhance outreach efforts to spread the word about his efforts and their importance to everyone in the county.

To learn more about the One Charlotte, One Water initiative, visit <https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/one-charlotte-one-water> or email OneCharlotteOneWater@charlottecountyfl.gov

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