



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Rick Scott
Governor

Jennifer Carroll
Lt. Governor

Herschel T. Vinyard Jr.
Secretary

February 20, 2012

Ms. Gwendolyn Keyes Fleming
Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3104

Dear Ms. Fleming:

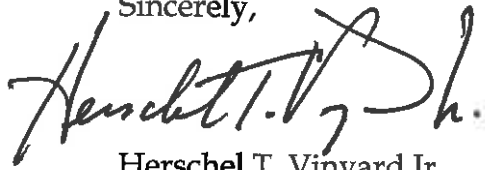
On December 8, 2011, the State of Florida's Environmental Regulation Commission (ERC) approved numeric nutrient criteria for lakes, spring vents, streams, and certain estuaries in Florida. Those criteria are represented in revisions to Chapters 62-302 and 62-303, Florida Administrative Code. These rules are based on more than a decade of research and data collection and underwent extensive public review and comment during their development. The rules are part of the long-standing commitment to the control of nutrients by the citizens of Florida, from grass roots organizations to industrial and agricultural operations to state and local government. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) feels that implementation of these rules in cooperation with all of these entities will result in Florida's continuing to be a national leader in developing innovative and comprehensive tools and programs to assess, prevent, and remedy nutrient problems in Florida's waters.

The Florida Legislature, recognizing the comprehensive nature of the proposed rules and the desirability of having FDEP's rules reviewed under the Clean Water Act as quickly as possible, has addressed the state's legislative ratification requirements and directed the FDEP to expeditiously submit the proposed rules to EPA for review under section 303(c) of the Clean Water Act. The Legislature's action had full bipartisan support. Accordingly, the FDEP is submitting the enclosed rules, the Technical Support Documents for the various rule provisions, a memo from FDEP's General Counsel, and other supporting materials.

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Our commitment to set numeric nutrient standards is underscored by our extensive investment in the development of both nutrient standards and biological metrics that are the basis for these rules. We will reduce nutrient effects in Florida's waters and ask that EPA return to Floridians the responsibility for protecting Florida's waters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herschel T. Vinyard Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Herschel T. Vinyard Jr.
Secretary

HTV/dsb

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Nancy K. Stoner
The Honorable Mike Haridopolos
The Honorable Dean Cannon