



PUBLIC
TRUST
FOR CONSERVATION



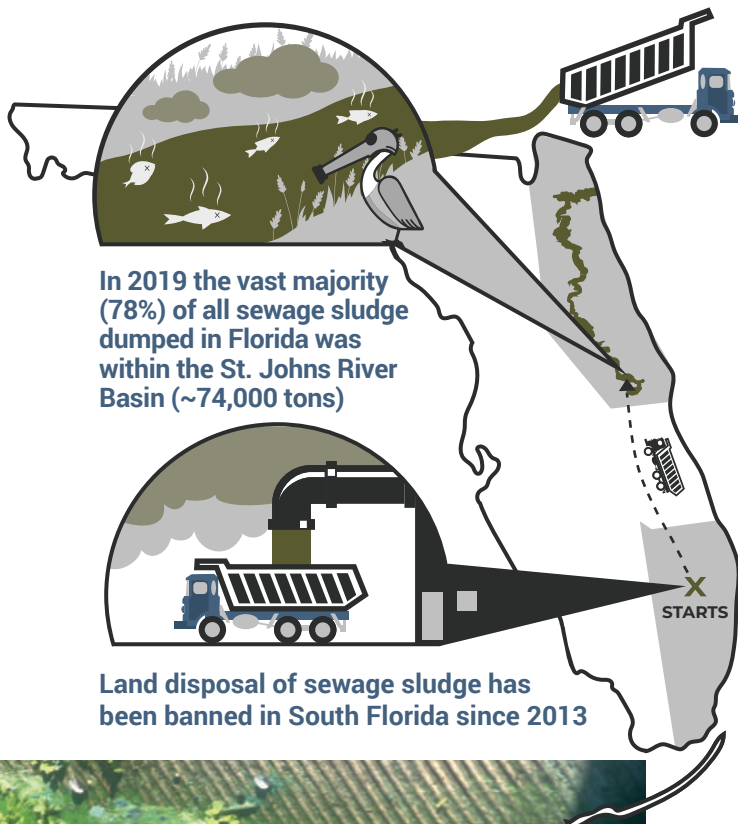
ST. JOHNS
RIVERKEEPER®

Our River. Our Community. Our Future.

Our St. Johns River's Sewage Sludge Crisis

The dumping of sewage sludge on land along the St. Johns River is causing destructive effects on wildlife, the natural environment, and the many people in our communities who depend on the river. Sewage sludge is the semi-solid pollutant left over when utility companies separate water from comingled human and industrial waste. This sludge not only supplies free fertilizer but also can contain heavy metals, pharmaceuticals, and "forever chemicals", such as PFAS that have ruined farmers' livelihoods, poisoned water supplies, contaminated food, and are linked to health problems including cancer.

The History Behind Our Sewage Sludge Problem



During the early 2000s Lake Okeechobee and other South Florida waterways were suffering through toxic algae blooms fueled by phosphorus pollution. To reduce excess phosphorus runoff and the resulting algae outbreaks, the Florida Legislature passed a state law banning the dumping of sewage sludge in South Florida.

**SOUTH FLORIDA'S SOLUTION?
TRUCK THEIR SH*T NORTH AND
DUMP IT ALONG OUR ALREADY
IMPAIRED AND UNPROTECTED
ST. JOHNS RIVER.**

Sludge Pollution Causes Toxic Algal Blooms

This massive influx of sewage sludge impacts us all by causing toxic algal blooms. On August 16, 2022, a massive algae bloom dominated Lake Washington (the drinking water source for the City of Melbourne), which is located just north of some major sewage sludge dumping sites.

This algae has the potential to produce cyanotoxins, posing serious adverse health effects to humans, including children who are more susceptible to these toxins that scientists fear can cause brain development deficits.



Harmful Algae Bloom at Lake Washington
on August 16, 2022



Spearheading the Coalition to Protect Our St. Johns River

In 2019 the St. Johns Riverkeeper came to the Public Trust to retain our professional legal services and form a strategic partnership for this campaign. In advance of the 2023 legislative session, we will spearhead a coalition of concerned citizens and elected officials to advocate for legislation to ban the dumping of sewage sludge along the St. Johns River- just as it has been banned in South Florida since 2013. The Public Trust for Conservation and St. Johns Riverkeeper are uniquely equipped and qualified to lead this campaign to protect the St. Johns River from the continued threat of sewage sludge. We have spent years coordinating the scientific assessments of ecosystems near sewage sludge dumping sites. This data, along with studies from the St. Johns River Water Management District, shows that aquatic ecosystems, including our fisheries, are approaching a breaking point after which our beloved St. Johns River may never be the same again.

Taking Legal and Legislative Action

The science makes it clear that sewage sludge is to blame for phosphorus increases in the St. Johns River. The St. Johns must now receive the same legislative protections as South Florida since our waters now share the same phosphorus pollution problems. Our river and our communities should no longer be polluted by another community's toxic waste.

The Public Trust for Conservation and St. Johns Riverkeeper are primed to take legal action to challenge the misapplication of sewage sludge at a ranch in the St. Johns River basin. Our legal challenge will draw attention to this grave situation and the need for South Florida to take full responsibility for the waste they generate and stop sending their sh*t north.

Our Sincere Request to You

This is an uphill battle, but we must persevere and we must *succeed*. The future of our river and our natural environment depends on it. Our nonprofits cannot do this alone.

The professional services needed to fund this type of legal and legislative campaign would typically cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more. Our nonprofits can spearhead this campaign at a fraction of the cost while delivering results on the strategic plan outlined above with your financial support.



Advocacy, Marketing, & Public Relations Costs to Pass Legislation	\$115,274
Ecological Assessments & Further Development of Critical Scientific Data	\$97,450
Expert Witnesses, Trial Exhibits, & Other Legal Fees/Expenses	\$112,933
Total Coalition Campaign Costs	\$325,657

We cannot do this alone. Your financial support will underwrite the science, the professionally developed marketing materials, the extensive advocacy costs involved with getting legislation passed in Tallahassee, as well as the legal work that fuels this crucial conservation initiative.



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