

FLORIDA BEACON

From the President's Desk Elva Peppers

Hello FAEP Members,



Florida Association of
Environmental Professionals
Fall 2023



It hardly seems possible that it's the last quarter of 2023. Hopefully everyone had a good summer. The year has certainly been a busy one for both FAEP and me, but there are so many good things coming ahead for our members. This issue's picture is of me this last summer in Alaska holding a big piece of algae. This was my first time visiting Alaska and hopefully I will get to go back again. Exploration and learning new things are what keeps many of us feeling alive and energized. Being outdoors and in nature has been proven to be good for our health, both mentally and physically. Fall is here and now is a great time to go out and explore and take a friend who may be hesitant. Maybe I'll see you out there! As for FAEP, we also have lots of things in the works for members to participate in and explore.

The 2024 FAEP conference will be in Orlando on April 25th and 26th. You will want to save the date for this year's conference, which is destined to be a good one. Planning is underway and opportunities for sponsorships, speakers and volunteers will be rolled out soon.

The FAEP workshop program is growing! The FAEP and its chapters have been able to offer Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, Hydric Soils and Wetland Delineation training workshops to its members over the past year and a half at deeply discounted rates. Be on the lookout for one near you and for the upcoming Groundwater Monitoring workshop, which will be added in 2024.

Thank you for being a member of FAEP and please let me know if there is anything you would like to ask or share. elvapeppers@felsi.org

Sincerely,

Elva Peppers
FAEP President
2022-2023

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Check the last page of our newsletter to determine if you qualify for a discount on your FAEP membership!

New FAEP membership rate for Retirees offered!

Find out more about FAEP Member's Benefits at our website:

WWW.FAEP-FL.ORG

Thanks for reading our newsletter!

Save the Date!

FAEP Annual Symposium

April 25 – 26, 2024

Orlando, Florida



The Northeast Chapter of the FAEP in Jacksonville recently had a social and networking event in the Riverside area. Members and non-members attended the event that was held at the Burrito Gallery. The chapter and FAEP are looking for members who are interested in being on the Board of Directors, being sponsors and becoming members of that chapter. Additional information will be distributed soon, but in the meantime, please send interest messages to elvapeppers@felsi.org and you will be put on the list for notices.

ABCEP



The Academy of Board Certified Professionals (ABCEP) is the certifying body for NAEP and the lead organization certifying environmental professionals; maintaining exemplary standards of ethics and technical practice; and supporting individuals, our profession, and the public relying upon our services. It is a board-certified recognition. Beyond the acknowledgement by your peers, earning and maintaining the Certified Environmental Professional (CEP) designation is beneficial as a key differentiator when bidding on projects. It also opens new doors personally and professionally.

ABCEP would like to enhance the CEP (and CEP-IT) by growing our numbers and raising the awareness and value of the credential. If interested, you can find more details about the CEP and the application process on our website <https://www.abcep.org>. If you email the office (office@abcep.org), our Administrator will follow up to see if you have additional questions about the application process and offer to assign a mentor to help guide you through it.

The initial CEP application fee is typically \$200. ABCEP is offering a 10% discount through the end of 2020 reducing the initial CEP application fee to \$180. This is a great time to submit your application! We also have a CEP-IT application for those that don't quite meet the CEP requirements.

Making the decision to pursue a certification can feel like a daunting task, but in this climate, having the designation after your name can prove that crucial differentiator. Please share this with anyone in your office that might be interested.

NAEP

CALL FOR ARTICLES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE BULLETIN

The NAEP Environmental Practice Bulletin is published four times a year and emailed to all NAEP members. The newsletter is published in mid-February, May, August and November. Deadline for submissions is the end of the month prior to publication. NAEP is always looking for articles for this great practitioner-based publication. Consider providing NAEP's nationwide audience a bit of your professional experience and insight. For more information about publishing in the Environmental Practice Bulletin visit: <https://www.naep.org/publications>.



National
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Be Connected

Florida Beacon

Published Quarterly by the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals

South Florida Chapter

Successful Seagrass Identification and In-Water Survey Workshop

The South Florida and Treasure Coast Chapters recently collaborated to host a comprehensive seagrass identification and in-water survey workshop. Aimed at empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective seagrass identification and surveying, the workshop was met with great enthusiasm from participants.

Led by experienced instructors, including Jen Savaro from Resource Environmental Solutions, LLC (RES), Gina Chiello from Cummins Cederberg, and Matt White from RES, the workshop took place on July 8th at the picturesque Historic Virginia Beach Park. Over 40 passionate participants eagerly took part in the event.

The primary goal of the workshop was to equip participants with the ability to identify various local seagrass species and macroalgae while familiarizing them with essential seagrass survey methodologies. The instructors shared valuable insights into recognizing local seagrass and macroalgae species, along with recommended seagrass survey protocols and techniques by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, US Army Corps of Engineers, and Miami Dade County DERM.

To provide hands-on experience, attendees engaged in a mock seagrass survey in the shallow waters of Bear Cut. This practical exercise allowed participants to apply their newfound knowledge and skills, reinforcing their understanding of seagrass identification and survey techniques. The subsequent open discussion and Questions and Answers segment further enhanced the learning experience.

The workshop received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participants, who applauded the comprehensive curriculum. The practical approach, combined with the insightful discussions, ensured a well-rounded educational experience, leaving attendees feeling confident in their ability to identify and survey seagrass.

Stay tuned for updates on upcoming joint seagrass identification workshops, which will continue to play a pivotal role in fostering stronger connections within the FAEP community.

By Jen Savaro



Florida Beacon

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For Florida's Ailing Corals, No Relief From the Heat

Scientists now fear a global bleaching event, with Florida leading

ORLANDO, Fla.—No immediate end is in sight to the unprecedented marine heat wave stressing the state's coral reefs, raising fears the heart-rending losses seen below may portend a global bleaching event that could affect reefs from Florida to Colombia, scientists of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Thursday.

The scientists said the record temperatures affecting the state's corals, including those protected as part of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, which includes the only barrier reef in the continental United States, are remarkable not only for their intensity but duration.

Since April NOAA scientists have tracked a steady rise in ocean temperatures. In the Florida Keys, the temperatures have been higher than previous records for 29 days between July 9 and Aug. 16. The scientists say the heat stress developed earlier than ever before by five to six weeks.

"There is a big concern among the coral reef scientific community that we are potentially walking into another global bleaching event, based on what we know and what history has taught us," said Derek Manzello, coordinator of NOAA's Coral Reef Watch Program. "This is a very serious event, and Florida is just the tip of the iceberg."

It will be months before scientists fully understand the scope of the problem, but they say they are seeing "thousands upon thousands" of miles of corals undergoing bleaching as a result of heat stress in Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, with Florida most impacted.

The heat wave is forecast to last through at least October, although a cooling event like a hurricane could change that, they said.

Heat affects corals, which are sedentary animals, by breaking down their relationship with the microscopic algae that lives inside them, gives them their color and provides them with food.

When the water is too warm, the corals eject the algae, leaving the corals to turn white. It is possible for corals to survive bleaching if the water temperature normalizes in enough time, but the event can leave the corals weakened and susceptible to disease.

The problem is expected to grow worse and more widespread as the global climate warms. The ocean absorbs 90 percent of the excess heat associated with climate change, and scientists say marine heat waves are intensifying worldwide.

Reefs are crucial to marine biodiversity and are important economic drivers, drawing snorkelers, scuba divers and anglers. They also serve as natural buffers protecting coastal communities from the pounding waves of storms and hurricanes.

To a lesser extent, corals are also threatened by acidification, the other impact on the oceans caused by the greenhouse gases warming the planet. Oceans absorb about 25 percent of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The carbon dioxide dissolves in water and forms a mild acid that neutralizes calcium carbonate and bicarbonate, which corals and other invertebrates use to build their hard shells and skeletons. Acidic ocean water can even dissolve these shells.

In Florida the mass bleaching event has sparked a rush to rescue the ailing corals from the hot waters and relocate them to on-land tanks, where they can be preserved. Thousands of corals have been relocated from the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, said Andy Bruckner, the sanctuary's research coordinator.

He said the effort also involves monitoring to identify corals that are showing resilience to the extraordinary temperatures.

"By next spring we will have a sense of how severe the impacts were from this event. But right now, other than the fact that we are seeing bleaching everywhere," he said, "we don't have a lot more information."

"We do need to worry," he added.

From: Inside Climate News by Amy Green



Coral on the ocean bed in Straits of Florida near Key Largo, in September 2021. Record warm ocean temperatures this summer are leading to what scientists fear may be a global bleaching event Credit: Chandan Khanna/AFP via Getty Images

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

Event	Date	Place
Florida Climate Week	October 2 -8, 2023	Virtual
Florida Redevelopment Association Annual Conference	October 24 – 27, 2023	Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
2023 Florida Remediation Conference	Nov. 1 – 3, 2023	Orlando, FL
2023 Natural Disaster Resilience Conference	Nov. 6 – 9, 2023	Clearwater Beach, FL
Clean Gulf 2023	Nov. 7 – 9, 2023	San Antonio, TX
48 th A&WMA Annual Air Information Exchange	December 6 – 7, 2023	Durham, NC
FAEP Annual Conference	April 25 – 26, 2024	Orlando, FL
NAEP Annual Conference & Training Symposium	May 5 – 6, 2024	Minneapolis, MN

FAEP shares information about conferences pertaining to the environmental professions. FAEP does not endorse any of the referenced conferences.

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EPA Releases Initial Nationwide Monitoring Data on 29 PFAS and Lithium

First of 12 sets of data to be released through 2026,
this information further builds upon EPA actions to address PFAS in Drinking Water

On August 17, 2023 the US EPA released the first set of data collected under the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5). In the latest action to deliver on [EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap](#), UCMR 5 will provide new data that will improve EPA's understanding of the frequency that **29 PFAS** and lithium are found in the nation's drinking water systems, and at what levels. The monitoring data on PFAS and lithium will help the Agency make determinations about future actions to protect public health under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This action advances the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to combat PFAS pollution and safeguard drinking water for all people.

"PFAS are an urgent public health issue facing people and communities across the nation. The latest science is clear: exposure to certain PFAS, also known as forever chemicals, over long periods of time is linked to significant health risks," said **Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox**. "That's why the Biden-Harris Administration is leading a whole-of-government approach to address these harmful chemicals. As part of this commitment, EPA is conducting the most comprehensive monitoring effort for PFAS ever, at every large and midsize public water system in America, and at hundreds small water systems."

The data collected under UCMR 5 will ensure science-based decision-making and help EPA better understand national-level exposure to these 29 PFAS and lithium, and whether they disproportionately impact communities with environmental justice concerns. This initial data release represents approximately 7% of the total results that EPA expects to receive over the next three years. The Agency will update the results quarterly and share them with the public in [EPA's National Contaminant Occurrence Database \(NCOD\)](#) until completion of data reporting in 2026. EPA continues to conduct research and monitor advances in techniques that may improve our ability to measure these and other contaminants at even lower levels.

EPA is acting to protect peoples' health from PFAS in drinking water. In March 2023, EPA [proposed standards to limit certain PFAS in drinking water](#). The proposal, if finalized, would allow public water systems to use results from UCMR 5 to meet the rule's initial monitoring requirements and to inform communities of actions that may need to be taken. In the interim period before the PFAS drinking water standard is final, EPA has established [Health Advisories](#) for four PFAS included in the UCMR 5. EPA continues to advance the science on the potential health effects of a wide range of PFAS, including many of those monitored for under this program.

EPA is moving forward to expand the investigation and cleanup of PFAS contaminated sites, including by finalizing new safeguards under Superfund to hold polluters accountable for contamination from two widely used PFAS chemicals. The Agency also recent issued its third order to require PFAS manufacturers to conduct testing under EPA's National Testing Strategy to help EPA better confront these forever chemicals.

EPA is also deploying an unprecedented \$9 billion, included in President Biden's [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), specifically to invest in communities with drinking water impacted by PFAS and other emerging contaminants. This includes \$4 billion via the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and \$5 billion through EPA's "Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities" grant program. States, Tribes and communities can further leverage an additional nearly \$12 billion in BIL DWSRF funds and billions more in annual SRF funds dedicated to making drinking water safer. These funds will help communities make important investments in solutions to remove PFAS from drinking water.

From: EPA News Release August 17, 2023

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Science Shorts ~NPR Short Wave~ The Science Behind the Headlines

This could soon be a first-of-its-kind marine sanctuary



More than 5,000 square miles of central California coast could soon become the newest national marine sanctuary in the US. It could also make history as one of the first federal sanctuaries to be initiated by a Native American tribe – the Chumash – and become part of a growing movement to give tribes a say over the lands and waters that were once theirs. NPR climate reporter Lauren Sommer dives into the details with host Regina G. Barber, touching on ocean science, heritage and what’s in a name.

Future of controversial Dakota Access pipeline’s river crossing remains unclear



Federal officials released a draft environmental review of the pipeline, but said they’re waiting for more input before deciding the future of the line’s river crossing in North Dakota.

Biden ends drilling in ANWR, sparking criticism, as Willow Project moves forward



The Artic National Wildlife Refuge is home to dozens of species – and to an ongoing political fight over oil and gas. Now, the Biden administration is hoping ending oil and gas leases will be a win.

Seaweed is mucking up beaches . This robot could stop it – and fight climate change



A new robot is designed to sink sargassum before the stinky seaweed comes ashore. Blooms of sargassum, a leafy brown seaweed, have increased in size and number over the past decade. As the blooms have grown, so too has their impact on coastal communities. The stinky seaweed can wreck local economies and ecosystems — and even threaten human health, some research suggests. But the creators of the AlgaRay say that their robot might do more than halt this damage. It could also fight climate change.

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