

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tim Engstrom
Communications Specialist
Lee County Government
239-271-7387
tengstrom@leegov.com

Lee Board of County Commissioners approves test project for algae cleanup

Fort Myers, FL, July 27, 2018 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners on Friday approved a test project for algae cleanup and directed staff to apply for funds from Florida Harmful Algal Bloom Management Grant Program through the Department of Environmental Protection.

The board also authorized staff to hire a vendor already under state contract to cleanup and dispose of blue-green algae from areas with the highest concentration. The board approved spending up to \$150,000 of general fund reserves to begin remediation in advance of the grant dollars.

“Lee County is taking steps to begin removing algae ahead of the state grant,” said Cecil Pendergrass, Chairman of the Lee Board of County Commissioners.

Gov. Rick Scott on July 9 declared a state emergency regarding algal blooms in seven counties and authorized the \$3 million grant program for cleanup. The Florida DEP activated its grant program earlier this week.

The County has conducted field and aerial assessments to determine the extent of harmful algae blooms in local waterways and will begin a targeted test project for algal bloom cleanup in significantly impacted areas. Once state grant funds are obtained, these targeted tests will extend to the most severely affected municipalities.

The Lee Board of County Commissioners continue to advocate for Everglades restoration projects, which are the long-term solution, as well as source control of nutrients in the waterways. The board will continue to seek state and federal dollars for those efforts.

The county will continue its robust water quality program and spends millions of dollars annually to reduce nutrient loading of waterways.