

Sierra Club Florida's 2019 priorities focused on **energy**, **water quality/quantity**, and **land use**. Check out the Governor's actions for these and **other issues**. His overall grade is a D.

The Issue	What Happened	What Florida Needs	Grade
Climate Change	The Governor acknowledged the need to adapt to climate change but has not put forth an initiative. He appointed Florida's first Chief Resilience Officer whose focus is preparing for the impacts of sea level rise but not addressing the causes of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive plan to address the root causes of climate change • No more permits or approval of fossil fuel power plants or pipelines 	D
Renewable Energy	The Governor was silent on converting Florida to 100% renewable energy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State commitment for 100% renewable energy before or by 2050 	F
Clean Transportation	DEP finally submitted its <i>Volkswagen Settlement Mitigation Plan</i> ; the last state to do so. With the purpose of offsetting statewide emissions of nitrogen oxides, the plan focuses the establishment of electric vehicle charging stations proximate to hurricane evacuation routes and transition to lower emission buses. The plan emphasizes zero-emission electric buses but leaves the door open to compressed natural gas or propane-powered engines. A commitment to mass transit was lacking and transportation funding focuses on building or expanding roads, with little going to safer "complete streets" in nation's most dangerous state for cyclists and pedestrians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widely accessible electric vehicle charging stations • Conversion to zero-emission buses • A commitment to mass transit • Increased funding for complete streets 	C
Oil and Gas	While the Governor said he is against "fracking" he never defined if it included matrix acidizing, the most likely type of well stimulation to be used in Florida. Supporting a ban on "fracking" without inclusion of matrix acidizing would result in no real protections for our land and water. The Governor voted to allow Tampa Electric Company (TECO) to increase the burning of fracked gas and coal at its Big Bend Power Plant which will exacerbate climate change and impact the health and welfare of the surrounding community. DEP approved permits for exploratory drilling in the Big Cypress National Preserve and the Apalachicola River Basin, threatening fragile habitat and endangered species. There was no indication that the Governor opposes new LNG terminals and natural gas pipelines. However, he voiced his support for a ban on offshore drilling in federal waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ban on all forms of well stimulation including fracturing methods and matrix acidizing • A halt on issuing permits or approving projects involving fossil fuels 	D

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Biosolids	The Governor signed HB 829 which preempts regulation of biosolids to the State and therefore eliminates further local protections once DEP develops rules. The proposed revised rules are an improvement over previous rules but still do not includes unregulated Class AA biosolids and other protections and therefore do not adequately safeguard Florida's waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equal protection for North and South Florida ● Bans within appropriate distance from water bodies/aquifer recharge areas ● Local regulation to meet unique aspects of watersheds 	D
Everglades Restoration	The Governor did not support the purchase of conservation land but rather supported funding for a 23-foot deep storage reservoir which will not perform water treatment functions, is not cost-effective, cannot send clean water south, is not safe, and does not ensure a significant reduction in discharges. However, he did approve \$40 million in the FDOT work program as part of the state's contribution to the Tamiami Trail project to elevate the roadway to enhance and restore ecological values and natural hydrologic conditions in Everglades National Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restore the River of Grass, to the greatest extent possible both functionally and spatially, by providing a shallow reservoir, restored wetlands, and conveyance of water south through tens of thousands of acres of land acquired and managed with Land Acquisition Trust Funds 	C
Springs/River Protection	DEP's ineffective water quality plans for fifteen Outstanding Florida Springs fail to meet the minimum standards in state law and have not curbed the increase in pollution to springs. In addition, DEP's Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) for many Florida waterways are not achieving water quality targets or protecting downstream waters. Funding to restore Florida's rivers and springs was woefully inadequate and large consumptive water users continue to withdraw Florida's water for free.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase funding for springs protection ● Adopt springs restoration plans that achieve water quality goals ● Strategically implement, monitor and fund BMAPs to achieve restoration targets, protect downstream waters and account for future growth. ● Institute fee on water withdrawals to help fund water restoration projects 	F
Red Tide and Blue Green Algae	The Governor signed SB 1552 providing Mote Marine and FWC with \$3 million/year for six years to identify ways to control and mitigate red tide but has not provided the same support for pollution control measures or the acquisition of conservation land critical to water quality protection. Control and mitigation lets polluters keep polluting. The Governor resurrected/established the Red Tide and Blue Green Algae Task Forces but the results of the work of these task forces remain to be seen. The first report of the Blue Green Algae Task Force laid out important first steps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve water quality by stopping the fertilizer, sewage, and manure pollution that increases the frequency, intensity, and duration of red tide and blue-green algae blooms 	C

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Growth Management	The Governor signed HB 7103 which now requires comprehensive plan amendments to conform to pre-existing development orders, and awards costs to prevailing party in challenges to development orders. This has had a chilling effect on citizen challenges, the only enforcement mechanism left to ensure that proposed developments are consistent with local comprehensive plans, the blueprints for growth in our communities in Florida.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reverse these provisions from law and strengthen enforcement of local comprehensive plans through reinstating State and regional oversight 	F
Conservation Land Funding	The Governor recommended \$100 million and ultimately signed a budget that only allocated \$30 million to <i>Florida Forever</i> and \$0 to <i>Rural & Family Lands Protection Program</i> . Funding also continues to be diverted to costs not associated with land acquisition and management. However, land acquisitions have been increasing at a steady pace with fairly seamless approval by Governor and Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 2019, after debt service, \$443.22 million was available for land acquisition and management; it is time to spend the money 	D
Plastics Waste	The Governor vetoed HB 771 which would have put a moratorium on local ordinances on plastic straws and established a study. However, the Governor has been silent on the need to overturn existing preemptions on other single-use plastics and deal with our growing issue of plastic waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● End preemption of local ordinances on single-use plastics or enact a statewide ban on all single-use plastics 	B
Preemption	The Governor signed HB 829 which provides that fees and costs will always be granted to the prevailing party in a challenge involving an ordinance that is "expressly preempted by the State Constitution or by state law." This has had a chilling effect on municipalities regulating in perceived "gray areas".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Return to previous law whereby each party to a lawsuit pays its own legal costs and costs are awarded to victims of unscrupulous or frivolous suits 	F
Tree Protections	The Governor signed HB 1159 which allows tree cutting/trimming/removal irrespective of local tree protection ordinances when a certified arborist determines that the tree is a threat to person or property. Already this has had a devastating effect and trees are being removed at a rapid pace through certification by unscrupulous arborists who stand to financially profit from their removal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retention of local tree protection ordinances including requirement mandating tree replacement 	F