



FLERA

FLORIDA LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCE AGENCIES

2026

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2026
HILTON JACKSONVILLE MAYO CLINIC
DUVAL COUNTY

AGENDA

TUESDAY- **SEPTEMBER 15**

6:00 – 7:30 PM

Board of Directors Meeting & Dinner
Hilton Jacksonville Mayo Clinic
Northstar 3

WEDNESDAY- **SEPTEMBER 16**

8:00 – 8:30 AM **BREAKFAST** (*Foyer*)

8:30 AM (*St. Johns I*)

Welcome Remarks, Annual Business Meeting
(Installation of Officers) & Overview of
Committees

David Vanlandingham, FLERA President
Director, Environmental Permitting Division
Broward County

9:00 – 10:00 AM

AI and The Environment: The Need for a
Pragmatic Approach

Joshua C. Gellers, Ph.D., LEED Green Associate
Dean of Professional & Lifelong Learning and
Inaugural Faculty Fellow for AI
University of North Florida

10:00 – 10:15 AM **BREAK**

10:15 – 11:00 AM

Transforming Environmental and Resilience
Projects with AI and Geospatial Technologies

Brendan V. Brown, PWS,
Sr. Environmental Scientist
CDM Smith

11:00 – 12:30 PM

All Things PFAS: From Compliance to Cleanup
(Session)

Navigating PFAS Compliance:

Evan Ged, Operations Manager
Advanced Environmental Laboratories

PFAS Legal Issues - From Regulation to Litigation:

Michael Goldstein, Esq.
Goldstein Environmental Law Firm

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Miami-Dade County DERM Perspective:

Wilbur Mayorga, M.S., P.E., Chief
Department of Environmental Resources Management
Miami Dade County

Moderator: David Vanlandingham, FLERA Immediate
Past President

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

2:00 PM **Committee Meetings**

Air Committee: *Mayport II*

Water Resources: *Mayport II*

Land Conservation: *Mayport I*

Natural Resources: *Mayport I*

Waste Management/Tanks: *St. Johns I*

3:00 – 3:15 PM **BREAK**

3:15 – 5:00 PM **Committee Presentations**

Air Committee

Water Resources

Land Conservation

Natural Resources

Waste Management/Tanks

5:30 – 7:00 PM **WELCOME RECEPTION**

Hilton Jacksonville Mayo Clinic
Northstar 4

AGENDA

THURSDAY - **SEPTEMBER 17**

8:00 – 8:30 AM **BREAKFAST (Foyer)**

8:30 – 9:30 AM (*St. Johns I*)

Managing & Resolving Conflict Effectively

Matthew Sowcik, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Leadership Program
University of Florida/IFAS

9:30 – 10:30 AM

2026 Legislative Briefing & Look Ahead at 2027

Diana Ferguson, FLERA Executive Director
Rutledge Ecenia
Peter Abello, Associate Director of Public Policy
Florida Association of Counties

10:30– 10:45 AM **BREAK**

10:45 – 11:45 AM

Community Air Monitoring (Session)

Jacksonville's Mobile Air Monitoring Project:

Mike Williams, Air Quality Branch Manager
City of Jacksonville Environmental Quality Division

Community Air Monitoring Project:

Jason Waters, P.E., Air Monitoring Section Manager
Christian Rodriguez, Senior Environmental Manager
Environmental Protection Commission
Hillsborough County

Moderator: James Richardson, FLERA Board Member

11:45 AM– 1:15 PM **AWARDS LUNCHEON (Mayport)**

Keynote Speaker: *The Honorable Bobby Powell, Commissioner, Palm Beach County*

Legislator of the Year Award Recipient:

Representative Kim Kendall, Florida House
Senator Jennifer Bradley, Florida Senate

Rick Wilkins Lifetime Achievement Award:

John Hickey, Sarasota County

1:15 – 2:45 PM

The Future of Sustainable Development (Session)

The Path to Wellness Way: Brooke Moffis,
Commercial Horticulture Agent
UF/IFAS Extension – Lake County

Alachua County's Florida Friendly Landscaping

Ordinance: Eliana Bardi, Senior Planner
Environmental Protection Department
Alachua County

Live Local Project: Helena Parola,
Planning Department Director
City of Jacksonville

Moderator: Stacie Greco, FLERA President

2:45 – 3:00 PM **BREAK**

3:00 – 4:30 PM

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (Session)

Microplastics in Tampa Bay:

Lyndsey (Zee) Grossmann
USF College of Marine Sciences

JEA Buckman Ozone Wetland Pilot Study:

Michael Dvoroznak, Wastewater Planning &
Engineering Manager
JEA

Shayne Wood, Vice President
CDM Smith

Wastewater and Stormwater Impacts in Florida's Estuaries:

Sherryl Gilbert, MS, MBA
Anthony (AJ) Gross, Graduate Student
USF College of Marine Sciences

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member

4:30 PM **CLOSING REMARKS**

Stacie Greco, FLERA President
Water Resources Program Manager
Environmental Protection Department
Alachua County

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

Welcome and Opening Remarks

David Vanlandingham, FLERA President
Director, Public Works and Environmental Services Department
Environmental Permitting Division
Broward County



David Vanlandingham is the Director of Broward County's Environmental Permitting Division, which houses environmental programs including Surface Water Management, Contaminated Site Cleanup, Waste Regulation, Wetland Mitigation, Tree Preservation, NPDES Compliance, and Hazardous Materials Licensing and Compliance Assistance. David is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University and the University of Arkansas, receiving a bachelors degree in Chemical Engineering and a masters degree in Environmental Engineering. He serves as the chair of FLERA's Tanks and Waste Committee, is a Florida-registered Professional Engineer, and has 30 years of experience in the environmental field. David is passionate about mentoring and has established several programs to incorporate student internships and equality programs within Broward County. While he currently calls Broward County home, David often spends time backpacking in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

AI and the Environment: The Need for a Pragmatic Approach

Joshua C. Gellers, Ph.D., LEED Green Associate
Dean of Professional & Lifelong Learning and Inaugural
Faculty Fellow for AI, University of North Florida



Dr. Josh Gellers is Dean of Professional and Lifelong Learning and served as the Inaugural Faculty Fellow for Artificial Intelligence at the University of North Florida (UNF). He is also an expert with the Global AI Ethics Institute, mayoral appointee to the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board, and member of the City of Jacksonville Data Advisory Committee. Dr. Gellers has published dozens of articles and chapters, and written two books, including *Rights for Robots: Artificial Intelligence, Animal and Environmental Law*. He is currently co-editing volumes on AI and the environment for Oxford University Press and Edward Elgar. Dr. Gellers holds a BA in political science from the University of Florida, an MA in climate and society from Columbia University, and an MA and PhD in political science from the University of California, Irvine. He has provided expertise on AI to legislators, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and numerous media outlets.

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

Transforming Environmental and Resilience
Projects with AI and Geospatial Technologies

Brendan V. Brown, PWS, Sr. Environmental Scientist
CDM Smith



Brendan Brown is a professional wetland scientist with over 19 years of experience in environmental data collection for ecological restoration and environmental compliance. He has extensive experience in assessing various ecosystems with advanced remote sensing and machine learning, including wetlands, grasslands, upland forests, seagrass, mangroves, and salt marshes. Brendan is the principal investigator of numerous R&D projects leveraging machine learning and remote sensing to assess environmental systems, including the use of lidar, multispectral sensors, drone-derived 3D models, and high-resolution cameras. He leads Sky Wave at CDM Smith.

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

All Things PFAS: From Compliance to Cleanup (*Session*)

Evan Ged, Operations Manager

Advanced Environmental Laboratories

Moderator: David Vanlandingham, FLERA President



Evan Ged leads operations across AEL's eight laboratory locations, with a focus on consistent performance, quality, and operational excellence throughout the organization. In his role as Operations Manager, he works closely with laboratory and sales leadership to coordinate projects, strengthen processes, develop staff, and advance strategic initiatives that support AEL's continued growth and innovation.

Evan rejoined AEL in 2022, bringing a decade of experience in engineering, design, and consulting. His connection to AEL, however, extends much further. Having grown up around the business, Evan witnessed its evolution from a one-person operation into the largest environmental laboratory network in Florida. That unique perspective, combined with his professional experience, provides him with a strong understanding of both the technical and operational sides of the environmental laboratory industry.

A nationally recognized expert in drinking water quality, Evan has extensive experience in drinking water treatment, water quality optimization, and public health. He is a licensed Professional Engineer in Texas and Arkansas and holds a B.S. in Environmental Engineering from North Carolina State University and a Master of Engineering from the University of Florida.

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

PFAS Legal Issues - From Regulation to Litigation:
(Session)

Michael Goldstein, Esq.
Goldstein Environmental Law Firm

Moderator: David Vanlandingham, FLERA President



Michael Goldstein is the Managing Shareholder of The Goldstein Environmental Law Firm, P.A. and one of the nation's leading attorneys focused on the acquisition, remediation, redevelopment, financing, construction, and reuse of environmentally challenged property. With more than three decades of experience, he advises developers, institutional investors, private equity firms, lenders, corporations, municipalities, and public agencies on complex environmental issues affecting transactions, development projects, and major public and private redevelopment initiatives. Recognized by Chambers and Partners (Band 1) and Martindale-Hubbell (AV Preeminent), Mr. Goldstein has advised clients on hundreds of contaminated-property transactions and redevelopment projects involving billions of dollars in private investment. His practice encompasses environmental due diligence, Brownfields and Superfund redevelopment, remediation and regulatory closure, PFAS and emerging contaminants, environmental insurance and risk allocation, environmental litigation and enforcement, permitting and compliance, landfill redevelopment, and environmental policy. He works closely with clients and their technical, financial, and development teams to address environmental risk while advancing successful, economically viable redevelopment projects.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Managing & Resolving Conflict Effectively

Matthew Sowcik, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Leadership Program
University of Florida/IFAS



Dr. Matthew Sowcik is an internationally recognized leadership educator, consultant, and author with over two decades of experience developing leaders. He serves as an Associate Professor of Leadership Development, in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication (AEC), at the University of Florida. Dr. Sowcik teaches undergraduate and graduate-level courses concentrated on interpersonal leadership development, organizational leadership and advanced leadership theory. As a result of his passion for leadership education and connection to students in his class, Dr. Sowcik received the 2020-2021 CALS Undergraduate Teacher of the Year Award. He holds a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies from Gonzaga University, an M.A. in Organizational Leadership from Columbia University, and a B.A. in Psychology and Business from Wilkes University.

WEDNESDAY PRESENTATIONS

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
Miami-Dade County DERM Perspective: *(Session)*
Wilbur Mayorga, M.S., P.E., Chief
Department of Environmental Resources
Management
Miami Dade County

Moderator: David Vanlandingham, FLERA President



Wilbur Mayorga is the Chief of the Environmental Monitoring and Restoration Division, Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM). His current area of responsibility includes contaminated site restoration (including the brownfields and the petroleum restoration delegation programs from FDEP as well as contractual services for cleanup of Miami-Dade County facilities), the County's wellfield protection program, and the DERM laboratory, among others. Mr. Mayorga also serves as an Advisory Board Member for the University of Florida's Hinkley Center for Solid and Hazardous Waste Management. Mr. Mayorga is a registered professional engineer in the State of Florida and holds a M.S. in Environmental Engineering from Florida International University.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

2026 Legislative Briefing & Look Ahead at 2027

Diana Ferguson, FLERA Executive Director

Rutledge Ecenia



Diana Ferguson is an attorney and lobbyist with Rutledge Ecenia in Tallahassee, FL. Her work is concentrated in the areas of environmental and administrative law, regulated industries and government relations. Diana previously served as the legislative staff attorney for the Florida Association of Counties. In that role, she lobbied water supply and water quality issues extensively as well as other environmental resource issues. With regard to water quality, she routinely worked on legislation pertaining to significant nonpoint sources of pollution, such as septic tanks and fertilizer, as well as regulatory issues such as total maximum daily loads, basin management action plans, and numeric nutrient criteria. Diana graduated from the University of Missouri – Kansas City with a political science degree. She earned her Juris Doctorate from the Oklahoma City University School of Law. She is a member in good standing of the Texas Bar Association and of the Florida Bar Association.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

2026 Legislative Briefing & Look Ahead at 2027
Peter Abello, Associate Director of Public Policy
Florida Association of Counties



Peter Abello is Associate Director of Public Policy at the Florida Association of Counties, where he leads the association's advocacy on agriculture and rural affairs, technology, and water and environmental sustainability. He brings three years of state government experience, including prior roles at the Florida Department of State and at the Florida Senate. Peter holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in International Affairs from Florida State University and is currently completing a second master's in Applied American Politics and Policy, also at FSU.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Community Air Monitoring (*Session*)

Jacksonville's Mobile Air Monitoring Project:

Mike Williams, Air Quality Branch Manager

City of Jacksonville Environmental Quality Division

Moderator: James Richardson, FLERA Board Member



Michael Williams has served as the Air Quality Branch Manager for the City of Jacksonville since 2016. The City of Jacksonville is an approved local air quality program, with the Air Quality Branch responsible for minor and synthetic minor source air permitting, compliance assurance for minor and Title V facilities, criteria air pollutant monitoring, asbestos compliance, and investigation of citizen complaints related to air quality and noise for the greater Duval County area.

Michael (Mike) is a registered professional engineer with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Colorado State University. He has been involved in the environmental field for most of his career, serving as a Vice President of a hazardous waste company, an environmental consultant, and operating his own multi-media environmental consulting and private investigation agency.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Community Air Monitoring (*Session*)

Community Air Monitoring Project:

Jason Waters, P.E., Air Monitoring Section Manager
Environmental Protection Commission
Hillsborough County

Moderator: James Richardson, FLERA Board Member



Jason Waters is a Professional Engineer with a degree in Chemical Engineering. He is the Chief Environmental Scientist in the Ambient Air Monitoring Section at the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) of Hillsborough County. Jason has 29 years of air pollution experience having worked in air modelling, permitting, compliance and air quality monitoring with the State of South Carolina, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the EPC, where he has spent most of his career.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Community Air Monitoring (*Session*)

Community Air Monitoring Project:

Christian Rodriguez, Senior Environmental Manager
Environmental Protection Commission
Hillsborough County

Moderator: James Richardson, FLERA Board Member



Christian Rodriguez is the newly appointed Senior Environmental Manager over the Ambient Air Monitoring Section at the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County. Christian comes from a background as a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist in the United States Army, with a passion for protecting public health through science and education.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

The Future of Sustainable Development (*Session*)

The Path to Wellness Way:

Brooke Moffis, Commercial Horticulture Agent
UF/IFAS Extension
Lake County

Moderator: Stacie Greco, FLERA President



Brooke Moffis serves as the Commercial Horticulture Agent at UF/IFAS Extension Lake County, specializing in Florida-Friendly Landscaping principles and urban biodiversity. With previous roles as an Extension Agent in Sumter County and Lake County, Brooke managed demonstration gardens and Master Gardener Volunteer Programs. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Horticulture from Tennessee Tech, a Master's degree in Entomology from the University of Florida, and is currently pursuing her PhD at the UF/IFAS School of Natural Resources and Environment. Brooke's rich landscape experience from Coorts Arboretum, Post Properties, and the Walt Disney World Company uniquely positions her to connect research with practical landscape applications. She aims to collaborate with industry to develop resource-efficient, ecological, and beautiful landscapes.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

The Future of Sustainable Development *(Session)*
Alachua County's Florida Friendly Landscaping Ordinance:
Eliana Bardi, Senior Planner
Environmental Protection Department
Alachua County

Moderator: Stacie Greco, FLERA Vice President



Eliana Bardi is a Senior Planner with over 20 years' experience researching and implementing programs to protect water and natural resources. Eliana implements regulatory and outreach water conservation programs for Alachua County. In her current role, she has been able to leverage her experience with the development review process and land development codes to further advance water conservation policies.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

The Future of Sustainable Development *(Session)*
Live Local Project:

Helena Parola,
Planning Department Director
City of Jacksonville

Moderator: Stacie Greco, FLERA Vice President



Helena Parola is the Director of the Planning Department, City of Jacksonville. She brings more than 28 years of experience in the City's Planning Department with a Masters of Urban And Regional Planning from the University of Florida. As Director, Helena is a liaison to City departments and commissions; state and regional agencies; and City Council. She is responsible for developing and managing all operations of the City's Planning Department, which includes the Community Planning Division, Current Planning Division, Transportation Planning Division, and the Office of Resilience.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (*Session*)

Microplastics in Tampa Bay:

Lyndsey (Zee) Grossmann

USF College of Marine Sciences

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member



Lyndsey (Zee) Grossmann is a PhD Student, University of South Florida.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (*Session*)

JEA Buckman Ozone Wetland Pilot Study:

Michael Dvoroznak, Wastewater Planning & Engineering Manager, JEA

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member

Michael Dvoroznak is a graduate of the University of North Florida with a degree in Civil Engineering and is a licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Florida. He has worked at JEA in multiple roles, gaining experience across the full spectrum of the utility's water and wastewater operations. His background includes long-range water supply and water and sewer systems planning, as well as hands-on experience within the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) department supporting the day-to-day operation of JEA's water system.

Michael currently serves as the Manager of Wastewater Planning and Engineering, where he is responsible for long-range capacity planning and rehabilitation and replacement (R&R) planning for JEA's wastewater and pump station facilities.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (*Session*)

JEA Buckman Ozone Wetland Pilot Study:

Shayne Wood, Vice President
CDM Smith

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member



Shayne Wood is a Water Resources Engineer and Vice President with CDM Smith in Jacksonville, Florida. He has 30 years of experience specializing in water resources planning and design. As a senior project manager for public sector clients he manages a broad array of water resource related projects including integrated water resources planning, ecosystem restoration, flood control analysis and design, and water supply planning, including aquifer replenishment, and direct and indirect potable reuse.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (*Session*)
Wastewater and Stormwater Impacts in Florida's
Estuaries:

Sherryl Gilbert, MS, MBA
USF College of Marine Sciences

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member



Sherryl Gilbert is Assistant Program Director at the University of South Florida's College of Marine Science, where she leads and manages large, multidisciplinary research programs focused on marine and coastal science. Her work includes management of federal, state and private funded projects addressing emerging contaminants in Tampa Bay and the Gulf, coastal mapping and technology, and the environmental and social impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. She holds an M.B.A. in Business Administration and Data Analytics and an M.S. in Marine Science/Physics from the University of South Florida.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Emerging Trends in Water Quality (*Session*)
Wastewater and Stormwater Impacts in Florida's
Estuaries:

Anthony (AJ) Gross, Graduate Student
USF College of Marine Sciences

Moderator: Steffanie Wickham, FLERA Board Member



Anthony Gross is a second-year master's student at the University of South Florida's College of Marine Science, where he researches environmental contaminants in the Tampa Bay region. His thesis research investigates chemical contaminants of emerging and known concern, pathogenic bacteria, and viruses within the Eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) in Tampa Bay, Florida. He holds a B.S. in Biochemistry and a minor in Marine Science from Eckerd College.

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Closing Remarks

Stacie Greco, FLERA President
Water Resources Program Manager
Environmental Protection Department
Alachua County



Stacie Greco currently serves as the County's Water Resources Program Manager with the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department, where she has worked to protect our water resources for the past 23 years. She received a B.S. in Environmental Science from Warren Wilson College in Asheville, NC prior to obtaining her M.S. in Environmental Engineering Sciences from the University of Florida. Her passion is applying social marketing techniques to change behaviors to protect our water. Stacie loves exploring our water by paddle craft.

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