



Division of Public Affairs
777 Glades Road, ADM 101
Boca Raton, FL 33431
561.297.3020 phone

*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

MEDIA CONTACT: Carin Campbell Smith
772-242-2230, carinsmith@fau.edu

FAU Harbor Branch Releases Recommendations for Improving Distribution of Indian River Lagoon Data *Report Provides First Inventory of Organizations Conducting IRL Research*

FORT PIERCE, Fla. (July 7, 2016) – In the midst of the algae crisis, FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI) will release recommendations on better utilizing the important research being conducted on the Indian River Lagoon (IRL). The recommendations will be presented by Dennis Hanisak, Ph.D., HBOI research professor and IRL Observatory director, at the IRL Council Board of Directors on **Friday, July 8 at 9:30 a.m. at Sebastian City Hall, 1225 Main St., in Sebastian.**

This workshop is the first organized effort to address where IRL data is housed, what types of data are collected, how the data is used and whether or not scientists and agencies can do a better job of collecting, organizing, translating and sharing the data.

“We need to answer these questions,” said Hanisak. “If we do, then we may be able to understand how we can all work better together to share the knowledge and make changes in how we manage the Lagoon in the future.”

The recommendations are based on input from scientists, policymakers, developers and other stakeholders that were given during a recent workshop. All the findings will be outlined in the report “Connecting Users to IRL Data.” Funded by the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation and the River Branch Foundation, this provides the first formal IRL-wide inventory of organizations and agencies collecting data.

“The release of this report is very timely as the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program addresses an updated management plan for the IRL and responds to continuing algal

blooms throughout the IRL system,” said Duane De Freese, IRL Council executive director. “We are looking forward to discussing these important recommendations and next steps.”

For more information, contact Carin Smith at 772-242-2230 or carinsmith@fau.edu.

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About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute:

Founded in 1971, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University is a research community of marine scientists, engineers, educators and other professionals focused on Ocean Science for a Better World. The institute drives innovation in ocean engineering, at-sea operations, drug discovery and biotechnology from the oceans, coastal ecology and conservation, marine mammal research and conservation, aquaculture, ocean observing systems and marine education. For more information, visit www.fau.edu/hboi.

About Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation:

The mission of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation, Inc. (HBOIF) is to support Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, a research institute within Florida Atlantic University. HBOIF provides funding and support for research and education in marine sciences and ocean engineering. Our goal is to support FAU's Harbor Branch as it increases understanding of oceans and coastal areas through exploration and scientific investigation. <http://www.hboifoundation.org/>

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.