

# CHARLOTTE HARBOR:

## Protecting the Heart of Charlotte County



### Committed to Sustainable Infrastructure for Our Community

Affordable, reliable, and efficient water quality is key to sustainable population growth, economic development, and the health of the County's natural resources and landscape. Charlotte Harbor's rich historical and aesthetic features have and continue to attract businesses and residents to the County. Maintaining our County's water quality is critical to the health and future growth of our neighborhoods and local economy.

Working together with Charlotte County's communities, the Charlotte County Utilities Department along with several local and regional partners are moving forward with developing a county-wide Sewer Master Plan. This collaborative effort strives to improve the watershed and protect Charlotte Harbor's water quality in an affordable, sustainable, efficient, and reliable manner.



#### AN ENVIRONMENTAL TREASURE

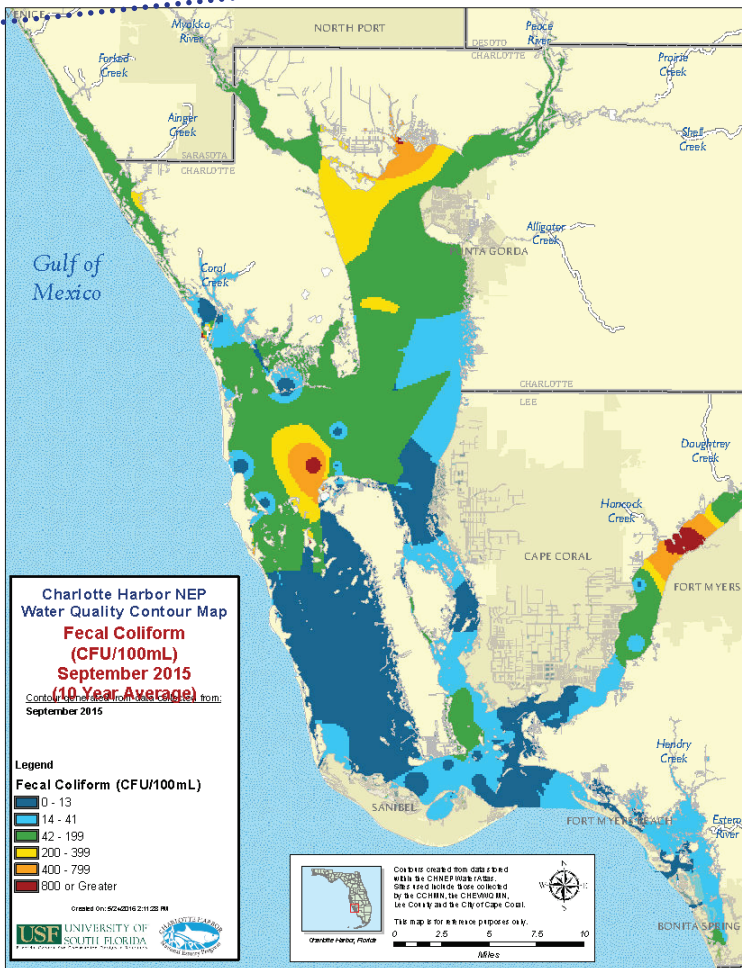
- ▶ Designated an Estuary of National Significance
- ▶ 2nd Largest Estuary in Florida
- ▶ 5 Aquatic Preserves
- ▶ Extensive Wildlife and Marine Life

#### AN ECONOMIC ENGINE

- ▶ \$526 Million in Annual Economic Impact
- ▶ Charlotte Harbor is known as a world-class destination for recreational fishing
- ▶ 830 Miles of Shoreline

#### WATER QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- ▶ Charlotte Harbor is on EPA's 303d List of Impaired and Threatened Waters for nutrients, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll a, bacteria in shellfish, and mercury in fish tissue
- ▶ Reducing pollutants entering the water bodies translates into fewer beach closures, which improves the quality of life for residents and tourists to the County's shorelines

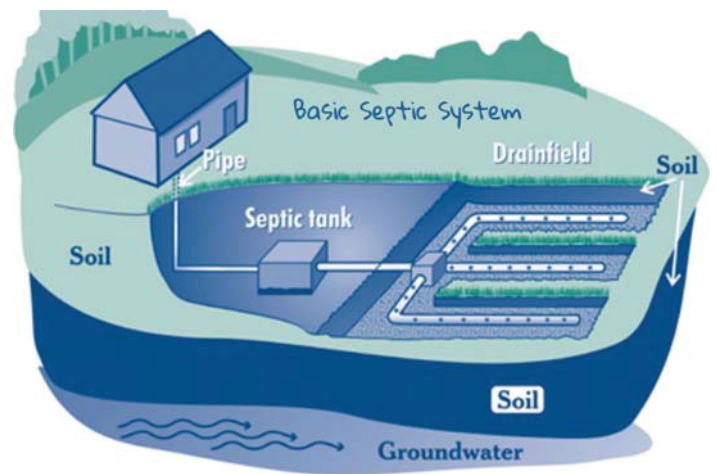


## WATER QUALITY THREATS

- ▶ Nutrient Loading
  - ▶ Algae Blooms
  - ▶ Red Tide
  - ▶ Fish Kills
- RESULTS IN**
- ▶ Closed Beaches
  - ▶ Reduced Tourism
  - ▶ Reduced Fishing

## MAJOR POLLUTANTS

- High Concentrations of:
- ▶ Nitrate
  - ▶ Biological Oxygen Demand
  - ▶ Ammonia
- Rising Levels of:
- ▶ Phosphorus
  - ▶ Chlorophyll a
- Increasing Levels of:
- ▶ Fecal Contamination



## SEPTIC TANK TECHNOLOGY

- ▶ County's service area has 27,000 septic tanks within an average distance of 700 feet, and a maximum distance of 3,175 feet of water bodies connected to the Harbor
- ▶ As lots develop, significantly more septic tanks are possible
- ▶ With our seasonal high water table and unsuitable soils, aging systems send pollutants & bacteria into waterways

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- ▶ Stay Informed! Sign up to receive our quarterly e-newsletter
- ▶ Participate in public meetings, workshops, and discussions
- ▶ Write a letter to the editor or an elected official
- ▶ Join a local organization/core support group

## LEARN MORE ONLINE

Check out the Sewer Master Plan web page for meeting announcements and links to resources, presentations, articles, research and more.



[Charlottecountyfl.gov/dept/utilities/Pages/Sewer-Master-Plan.aspx](http://Charlottecountyfl.gov/dept/utilities/Pages/Sewer-Master-Plan.aspx)

