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## Executive Summary

### Public Opinions of Water in Florida

February 2014

#### Introduction

Water quality and water quantity are crucial issues in Florida. As the population continues to grow, balancing agricultural needs, business and development needs, and public use has become more challenging. The Public Opinions of Water in Florida survey was taken by 516 Florida residents and examines public opinions related to water quality and quantity issues.

#### Key Findings

- Eighty-three percent of respondents considered water in Florida to be a highly or extremely important issue. When compared to concern over multiple issues, water ranked third, behind the economy and healthcare.
- Respondents had low overall knowledge about the Apalachicola Bay oyster production decline and current Florida lawsuit pending against Georgia for water use. Only 31% knew about the oyster decline before taking the survey, and only 26% knew about the lawsuit before taking the survey.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents reported they were unsure whether the lawsuit was the right thing for Floridians, and 46% were unsure whether the lawsuit was occurring at an appropriate time.
- Only 41% of respondents felt highly or extremely confident that there will be enough water to support their community's needs in the next 10 years.
- While 69% of respondents would be willing to have a 10% cost increase to their water bill if it helped ensure future water availability in Florida, only 7% would be willing to pay a 50% cost increase to their water bill.
- Forty-six percent of respondents considered the water quality in Florida rivers to be getting worse, and 44% considered the water quality of Florida lakes to be getting worse.
- Eighty-six percent of respondents considered plentiful water for cities highly or extremely important, compared to just 11% who considered it highly or extremely important to have plentiful water for golf courses.
- Fifty-nine percent of respondents reported they have not experienced any personal negative impacts due to low water quality, while 20% have experienced poor drinking water at home, and 19% have experienced closed beaches due to red tide or poor beach water quality.

- Respondents were more likely to own low-flow shower heads (54%) and water efficient toilets (58%) than rain barrels (14%) for conserving water.
- Forty-two percent of respondents were “very likely” to support water restrictions issued by their local government, while only 7% reported they were “very likely” to join a water conservation organization.
- Respondents were more likely to only run the washing machine when it is full (90% reported they were likely or very likely to do so) than to buy a specialty license plate that supports water protection efforts (20% reported they were likely or very likely to do so).
- Respondents reported an overall low level of awareness of policies and legislative acts impacting water quality and quantity issues in Florida. Respondents were most familiar with the Clean Water Act, with just 19% who reported they were “moderately familiar” with this act.
- Seventy-percent of respondents have their own yard, and 54% of those with a yard take care of it themselves.