

Seminole Tribe and Conservation Partners Visit Successful Nutrient Reduction Project at Lake Istokpoga

The **Cypress Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America (Cypress IWLA)**, **Lake O Airboat Association**, **Florida Airboat Association**, and **Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association** recently hosted **Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman Marcellus Osceola** and a delegation of Tribal leadership for a field visit to the **South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) / Aquaculture Nutrient Reduction Project on Lake Istokpoga**. The project is one of many projects included in the Northern Everglades and Estuary Protection Program.

Chairman Osceola was joined by representatives from the Tribe's **Departments of Operations, Agriculture, Environmental Protection, Conservation, Water Resources, and External Environmental Compliance**, as well as the Tribe's environmental counsel from **Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A.** Together, they toured the ongoing project. This innovative effort combines aquatic vegetation management with nutrient mitigation and agricultural reuse.

The Lake Istokpoga project has successfully removed **almost 25 million gallons of muck** from the lake bottom, capturing an estimated **4,000 pounds of phosphorus** and **90,000 pounds of nitrogen**—a significant step toward improving water quality and restoring habitat. The harvested material is converted into a nutrient-rich soil amendment applied to local ranchlands, providing tangible benefits to both the environment and agriculture.

During the visit, the delegation met with the participating landowner, who expressed his satisfaction with the soil amendment's results and the improvement it has brought to his pastures and cow-calf operation.

Representatives from the sportsmen's community engaged in meaningful conversations with Tribal and NGO partners about the importance of collaboration among **conservation, agriculture, and traditional land stewardship**. The success achieved at Lake Istokpoga serves as a compelling example of how cooperation, innovation, and shared purpose can overcome Florida's conservation challenges.













