



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

April 6, 2020

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor
Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis:

I write regarding the ongoing response at the Piney Point HRK Site in Manatee County. EPA shares Florida's goal of preventing a catastrophic failure and uncontrolled release from the Piney Point facility. We also share the goal of minimizing adverse ecological impacts from the wastewater discharges to Port Manatee and Tampa Bay. As the state of Florida continues leading emergency response efforts, I want to apprise you of the steps the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken to support these efforts, and to offer additional assistance.

In the days since the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) began undertaking emergency operations at the site, EPA Region 4 and Headquarters staff have been actively monitoring the situation and remained in close communication with your office, FDEP, FDEM and other state and federal agencies. On April 3, 2021, EPA deployed an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) to liaise with emergency management agencies on-site and coordinate EPA support as necessary. The EPA OSC has now joined the Unified Command structure which includes FDEP, FDEM and Manatee County. I understand that additional EPA personnel have been requested by the Unified Command including EPA technical and engineering staff. EPA is working to provide those as soon as possible.

EPA is also prepared to provide additional support to the response effort in relation to your sampling and analysis activities. EPA has heard concerns from the public regarding the characteristics of the water being discharged. To help address those concerns, EPA is interested in partnering with Florida in the chemical analysis of the water being discharged. Specifically, we believe splitting samples with Florida, and allowing EPA to perform independent analyses of the water quality would help assure the public and inform our shared understanding about the risks to the environment posed by water being pumped out of the Piney Point facility. FDEP and EPA Region 4 could collaborate on the logistics.

We understand right now your top concern is public safety and health. We are all keeping the Floridians in our thoughts who are evacuated and facing potential impacts from uncontrolled discharges. I look forward to staying in close contact on this situation. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or your staff may contact Casey Katims, EPA's Deputy Associate Administrator for Intergovernmental Relations, at katims.casey@epa.gov.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Michael S. Regan

cc: Secretary Noah Valenstein
Florida Department of Environmental Protection