

Florida Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network



"Utilities Helping Utilities"

Steve Soltau, FlaWARN Coordinator



Florida Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network

Utilities are often the first responder to the various emergencies following a disaster



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FlaWARN is...



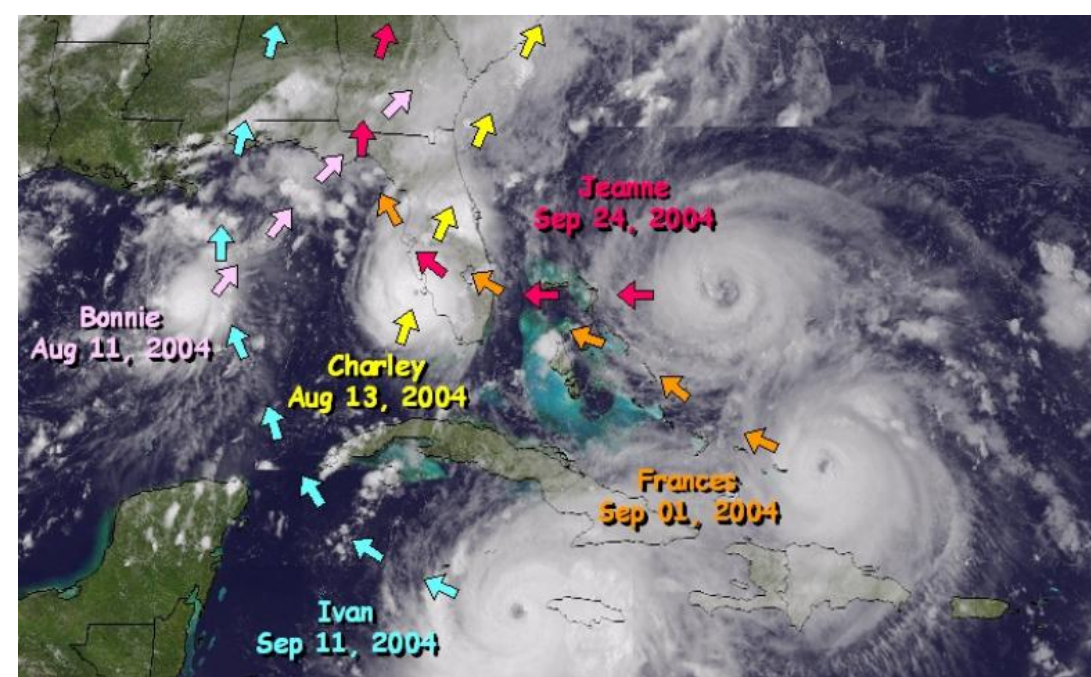
- **Formalized mutual aid response network** of utilities willing to provide critical resources to member utilities during man-made or natural disasters.
- **Open to all** water and wastewater utilities
- Designed to help **protect public health and the environment**
- **Support entity** to Florida county and state Departments of Emergency Management
- The FDEP and the **WATERTracker** resourcing database



Julian Lugo, 7, crosses a flooded street in front of his house near Lake Maggiore after Hurricane Milton made landfall in October in St. Petersburg. (DIRK SHADD | Times, 2024)

How did FlaWARN get started?

Frances
Jeanne
Ivan
Charley



- In the fall of 2004, four hurricanes impacted the State of Florida
- Utilities found it **difficult to get the necessary assistance without a formalized agreement** for the responding utility to get reimbursed for their efforts.





How did FlaWARN get started?

- Very apparent that there was a need to **expand** response and recovery efforts **statewide**
- FlaWARN was borne shortly thereafter in **April of 2005**
- Offers member utilities a **FREE** standardized **Mutual Aid Agreement**
- Defines terms and conditions of **reimbursement** prior to requesting and receiving assistance



FlaWARN's Purpose...

Coordinate initial communication

- ✓ **Appropriate crews, tools, and equipment** necessary to do the job
 - ✓ **both assess and assist** the impacted utility
- ✓ Facilitate **free flow of information** during a crisis



FlaWARN's Purpose...

- State and Federal Agency **coordination** during the response
 - identify **additional resources** as they become available
- Collect and track **Mutual Aid Agreements**
- Assist in collecting **lessons learned** after an emergency

- A steering committee **provides leadership** for FlaWARN



FlaWARN's Purpose...

- **FlaWARN is NOT** a corporation or a government entity
- **Agencies supported** include but are not limited to



What are Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA)

- Mutually **Signed agreement**
- Establish the **terms** under which assistance is provided
- Between **two or more utilities** within the state
- Membership **Free** to utilities



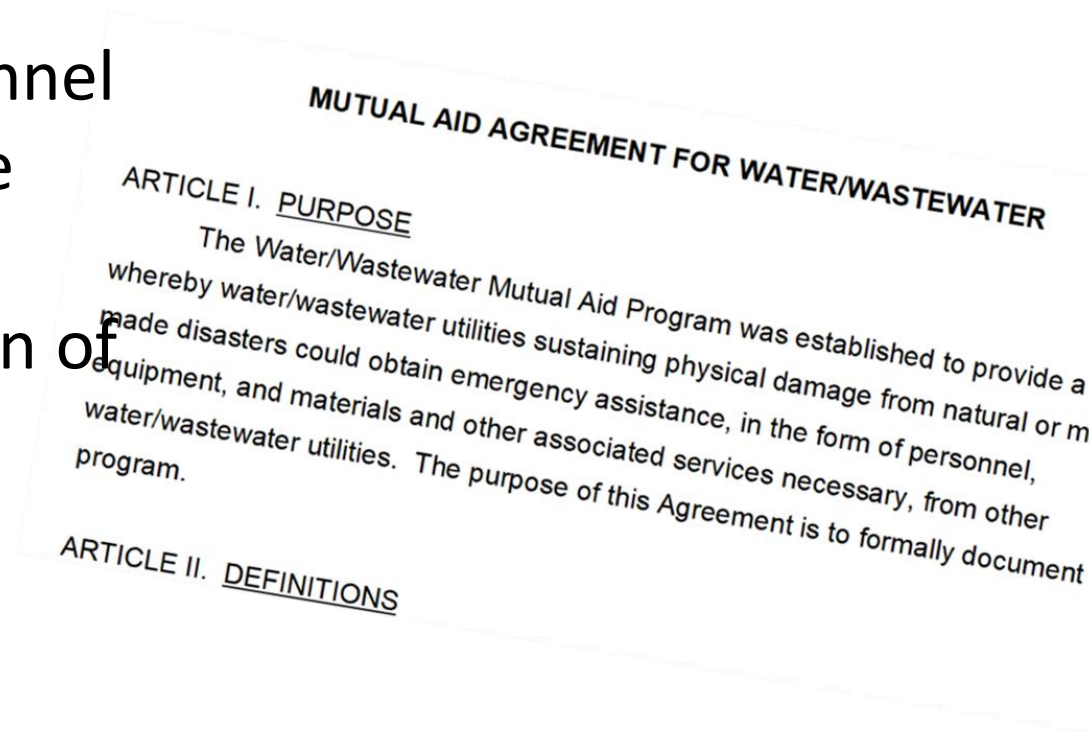
[FlaWARN](#) Mutual Aid Agreements link

Mutual Aid Agreements (**MAA**)

- **Carefully crafted** to promote “utilities helping utilities”
- Facilitates the **rapid emergency response** between FlaWARN member utilities
- Provides member utilities with an **advanced good-faith** indication from a responsible party
- Participating utilities **understand and agree** to concepts and provisions, *including reimbursement*
- It is designed to **settle disputes or legal issues**

Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA)

- Designates **points of contact** and representatives with **authority** to provide crisis response
- Provides **procedures** for matching personnel and equipment **to meet the needs** of the requesting utility during an emergency
- Delineates **span of control** for supervision of personnel and equipment



Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA)

- ✓ Provisions for **Reimbursement**
- ✓ FEMA standard rates or otherwise **agreed upon rates**
- ✓ Liability and **worker's compensation** provisions
- ✓ Dispute **resolution**
- ✓ Members **free**



FlaWARN during Blue Skies

- Train utilities on the **need for MAA's**
- Train on **tools available** for response and aid
- Assist in **collecting lessons learned** after a crisis
- **Coordinate** with State and Federal Agencies preparing for response
- Coordinate **resources** as they become **available**
- Collect and track **Mutual Aid Agreements**

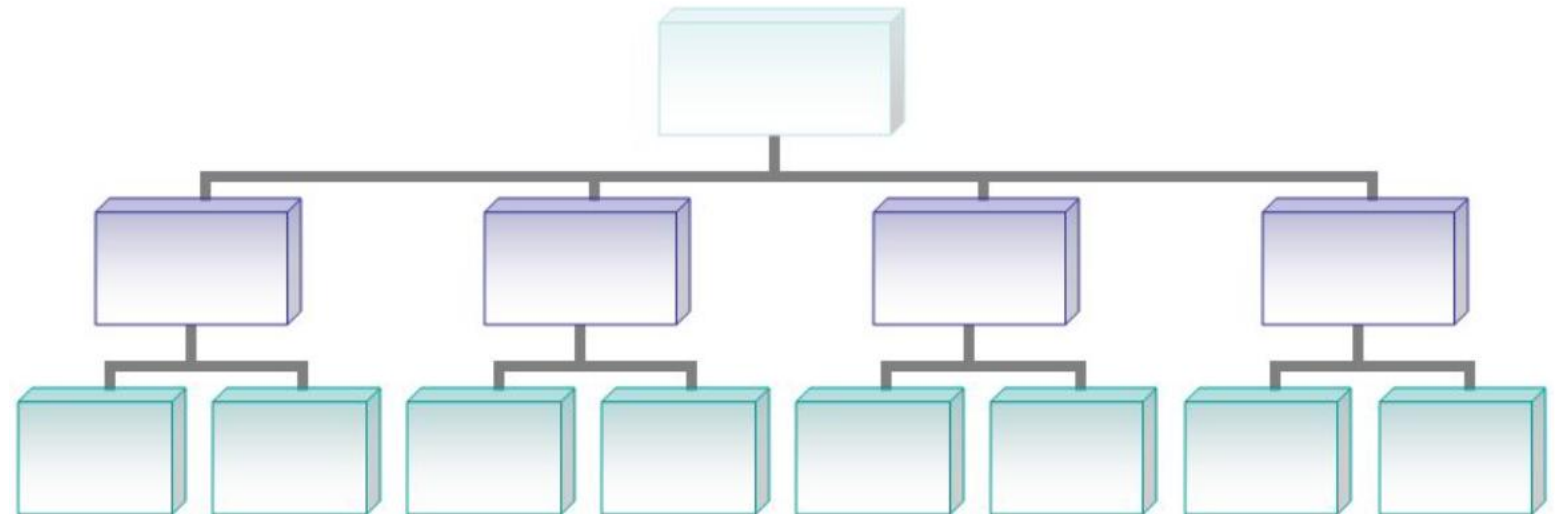
FlaWARN Website



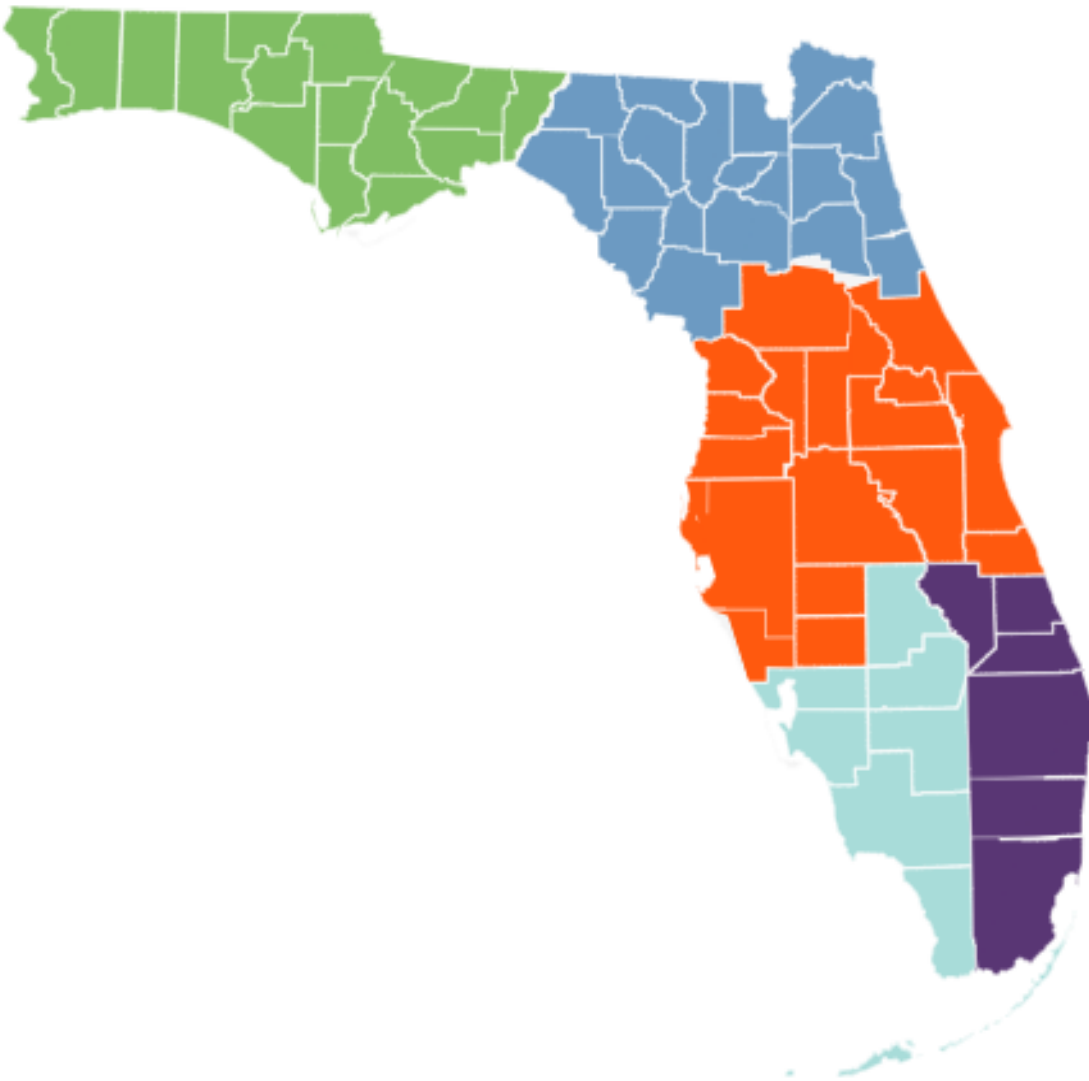
FlaWARN Infrastructure


Steering Committee and Regional Coordinators

- **Provide leadership** to FlaWARN
- Composed of representatives of Florida water/wastewater professional organizations




Regional Coordinators




 Central

Todd Swingle (P)
Toho Water
407-624-1026

Rick Nipper (A)
Toho Water
407-225-3356

 Northeast


Beth DiMeo
JEA
904-599-7591

 Northwest

Monica Wallis
Destin Water Users
850-337-3945

Sean Lathrop
Bay County Utilities
850-630-1954


Lockwood Wernet
Destin Water Users
850-200-2028

 Southeast

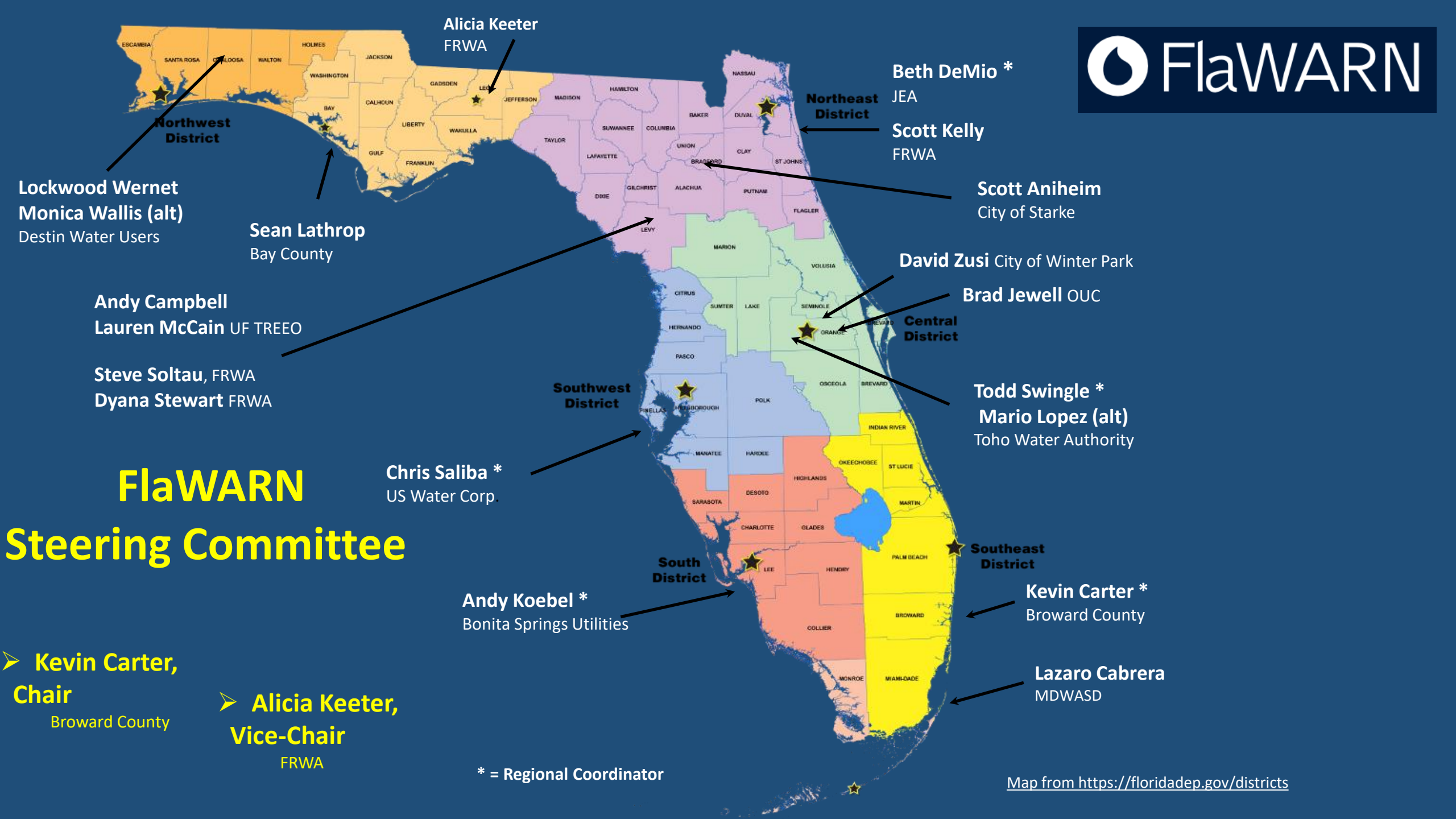
Kevin Carter (P)
Broward County
954-856-3879

  South

Andy Koebel
Bonita Springs Utility
239-992-0711

 Southwest

Chris Saliba
US Water Corporation
813-416-3992



Lockwood Wernet
Monica Wallis (alt)
Destin Water Users

Sean Lathrop
Bay County

Andy Campbell
Lauren McCain UF TREEO

Steve Soltau, FRWA
Dyana Stewart FRWA

Chris Saliba *
US Water Corp.

Andy Koebel *
Bonita Springs Utilities

Alicia Keeter
FRWA

Beth DeMio *
JEA

Scott Kelly
FRWA

Scott Anheim
City of Starke

David Zusi City of Winter Park

Brad Jewell OUC

Todd Swingle *
Mario Lopez (alt)
Toho Water Authority

Kevin Carter *
Broward County

Lazaro Cabrera
MDWASD

FlaWARN

Steering Committee

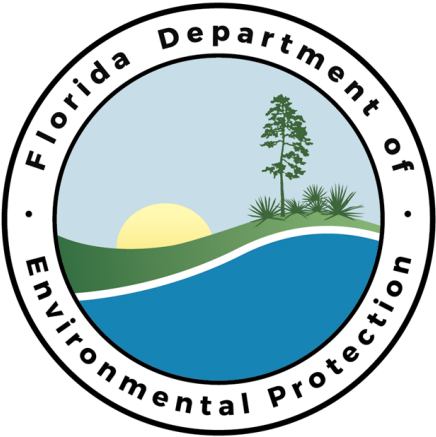
➤ **Kevin Carter,**
Chair
Broward County

➤ **Alicia Keeter,**
Vice-Chair
FRWA

* = Regional Coordinator

Map from <https://floridadep.gov/districts>

Composed of representatives of Florida water/wastewater professional organizations



Year-round Support Staff



Andy Campbell

UF Office of Professional and Workforce Development

apc@ufl.edu

352-262-0608



Lauren McCain

UF Office of Professional and Workforce Development

lmccain@treeo.ufl.edu

352-294-3876



Ronald McCulley

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

ronald.mcculley@floridadep.gov

850-245-8384

Florida's WATER Tracker

Water Assistance Tracking & Emergency Response



- Major **internet-based platform** for user utilities
- **Notify** the DEP and FlaWARN via email
 - post-storm status, resource needs, resource availability
- A **tool** for other emergency events

- Resources **available** online



Find a
Facility



Manage
Users



Update
Status



Offer
Help



**Get Help
NOW!!**

Florida's WATER Tracker

Water Assistance Tracking & Emergency Response



- Please log on occasionally to know your password be sure **your emergency contact is up-to-date**
 - <https://flwatertracker.com/>
- **Confirm** your utility has an approved **Mutual Aid Agreement**
 - facilitates receiving assistance






Florida's WATER Tracker

Water Assistance Tracking & Emergency Response



Be The Difference, Master Emergency Response/Plant City/031725

Attendees Will Be Given Hands On Training For Emergency Situations.

-  Monday, March 17, 2025
-  8:00 AM – 3:30 PM (EDT)
-  Sayde Gibbs Martin Community Center
302 South Maryland Avenue
Plant City, FL 33563
United States

Register Now

- **0.6 DW, 0.6 DS, or WW CEUS/6.0 PDHs**
- **This workshop was designed to give Water and Wastewater Utility staff hands on training in Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Items covered will include:**
 - How to update Emergency Response Plans
 - Provide experiences and lessons learned from past natural or man-made emergencies
- **This workshop will also provide training in the WaterTracker Program used during an Emergency Response. Items covered will include:**
 - How to update Emergency Contacts
 - How to post needs and/or available resources during an emergency event
 - How to complete and upload a Mutual Aid Agreement

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More questions? Visit our [FAQ page](#) for a more in-depth look of FlaWARN origins, funding, organizational structure and response history.

Thank you!



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The
end...

