

Oil spill...what oil spill?

While many environmental staffs in Florida have been busily responding to the Deepwater Horizon incident, the numeric nutrient criteria clock remains ticking toward several important milestones.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is developing numeric nutrient water quality standards for Florida waters, including lakes and flowing waters, and estuaries and coastal waters. On October 15, 2010, EPA will adopt numeric criteria for nitrogen and phosphorus in lakes and flowing waters outside of South Florida. Many await this date in anticipation of EPA's responses to thousands of comments and questions it received in April on its proposed criteria.

The schedule for estuarine and coastal water criteria has been recently modified and requires USEPA to propose estuarine and coastal waters nutrient criteria and downstream protective values in Florida by November 14, 2011 to allow for peer review by the Science Advisory Board (SAB) and to allow for public comment, followed by USEPA revision of the proposed numeric nutrient criteria.

There are very serious ramifications associated with the establishment of the numeric criteria and everyone should stay informed by going to EPA's website - <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/standards/rules/florida/>.