



ALACHUA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPAC)

Annual Report Update

**Environmental Protection Department
Jay Rosenbek, EPAC Chair
December 9, 2025**

EPAC History

- Established April 1984 for the purpose of citizen-guided protection of natural resources in Alachua County
- Board extended sunset to 2030 on August 12, 2025
- Currently nine-members and one alternate

EPAC Mission

- EPAC advises the Alachua County Commission on safeguarding the county's air, water, natural resources, and on the responsible management of public lands.
- Increase community involvement and awareness of local government environmental initiatives and encourage community members to bring environmental issues to the committee's attention.

Water quality and water resources

- EPAC passed motion to express strongest possible support for all efforts to preserve Mill Creek Sink and other surface and ground water resources from negative impacts of Tara developments in City of Alachua



Mill Creek Sink

EPAC, Major Accomplishments, 2025

Land Use and Conservation

- Unanimously passed a motion to support and expand Alachua County Tree Policy
- Unanimously passed a motion to support citizen led effort to get Scenic Road status for Lakeshore Drive

Lakeshore Drive



Photo by John Moran

Land Use and Conservation

- Received review of progress on Climate Action Plan from Jennison Kipp, Resiliency Specialist
- Supported the effort and provided suggestions, including emphasis on public-facing dashboard
- Questioned the impact of SB 180

Recycling and Waste Management

- Two presentations by Mr. Olmos, Director of solid Waste and Resource Recovery, on Eco-Loop
- We understand the Loop's history and presented him with a list of suggestions in hopes one might reenforce what all of you are suggesting

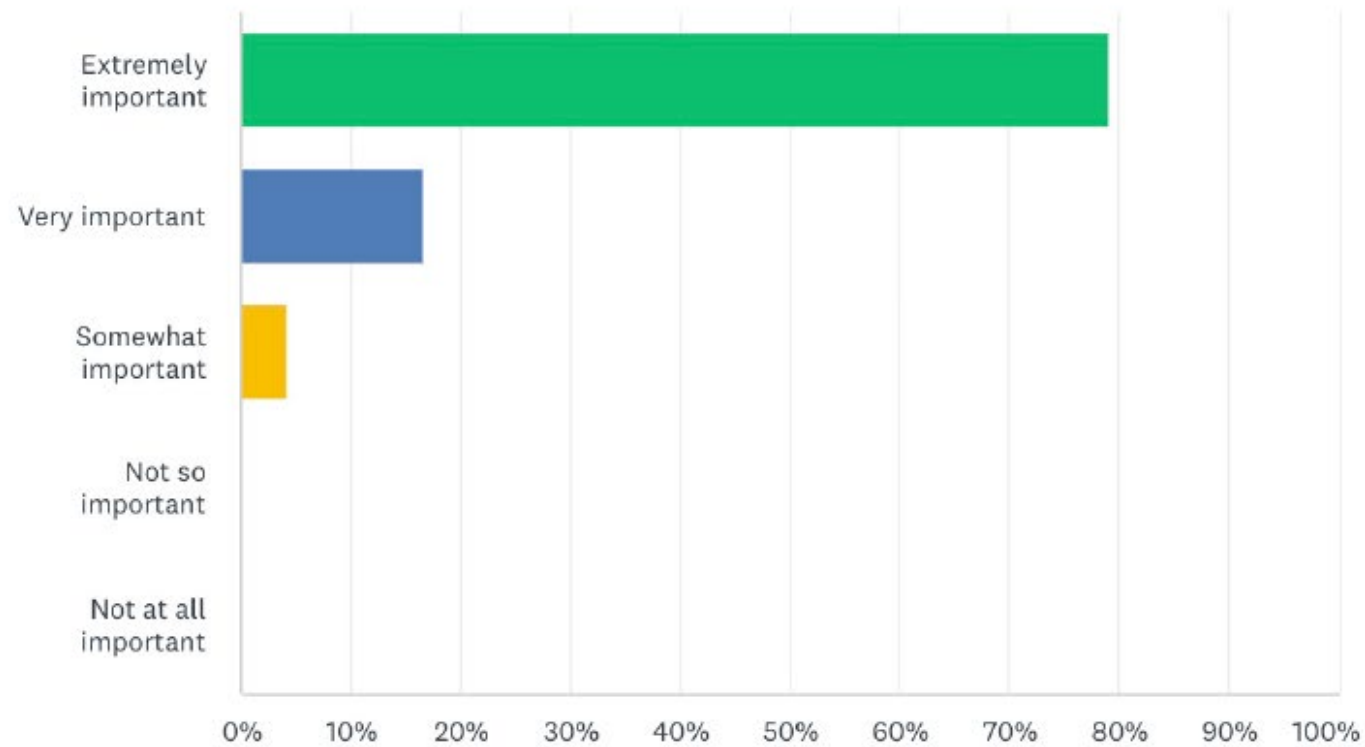
On Trash

- If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, resold, recycled, or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production
 - Pete Seeger
- Until then EPAC will do all it can to help on this issue
 - Jay Rosenbek

Community Outreach: Second Survey Results

How important are environmental issues to you?

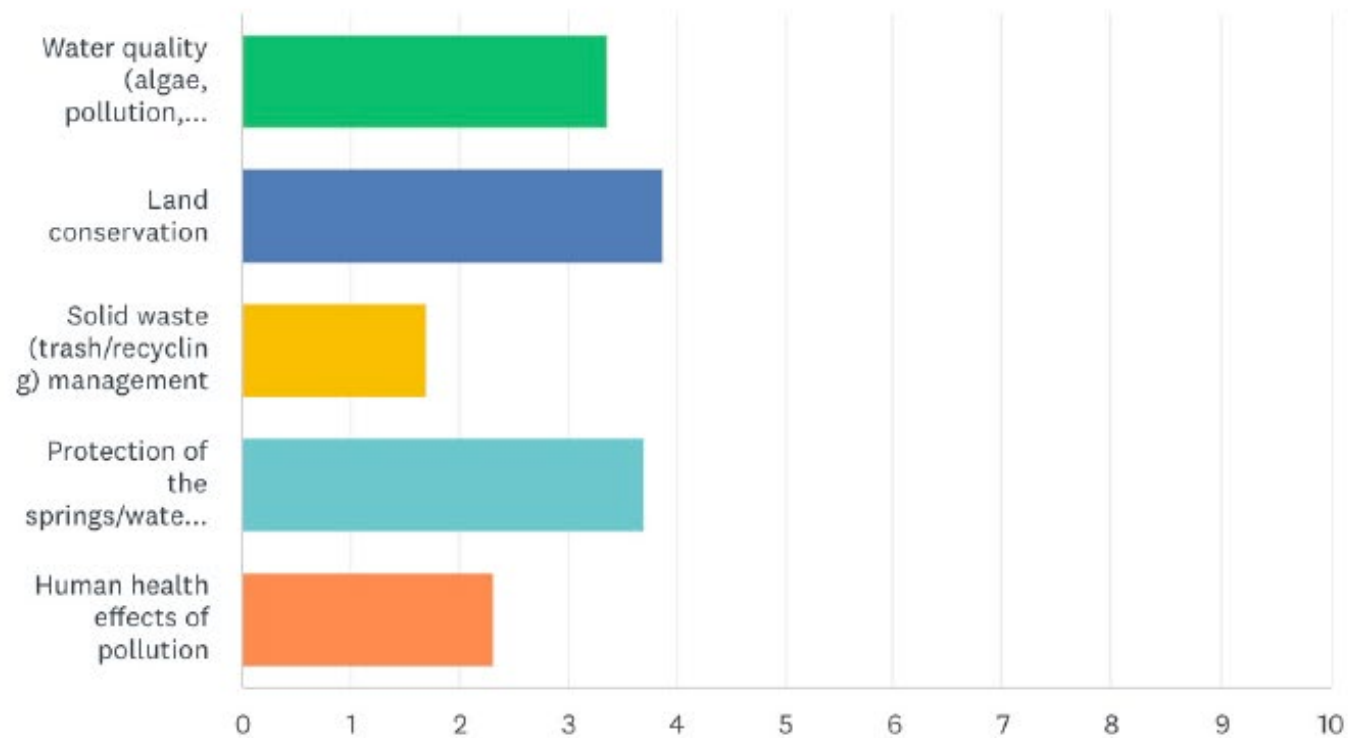
Answered: 48 Skipped: 1



Second Survey Results Continued

Please rank the following environmental issues in order of importance to you.

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



EPAC 2026 Goals

Our 2026 Work Plan contains an ambitious list

We recognize we will not meet them all, that people plan and God laughs

List signals the committee's recognition of its mission

What follows are selected highlights preceded by motivating forces



Photo courtesy of Chuck Ross

Primary Forces Driving Goal Selection for 2026

Preserving Environmentally Sensitive and Ag lands; Encouraging Sustainable Growth

- Population growth and development pressure are threatening, and in some cases, eating up our environmentally sensitive lands and farmlands
- As Mark Twain said, “They aren’t making more land” so minimal impact development is critical
- As is thoughtful, intelligent compromise
- As is creative, forceful engagement with forces that would limit or abolish home rule such as SB 180



Water Quality and Water Resources

- Advocate for the strongest possible policies and practices to protect our water
- Support BOCC efforts to improve collaboration of county and municipalities on water issues
- Support citizen initiatives to further protect water bodies through state and federal designations

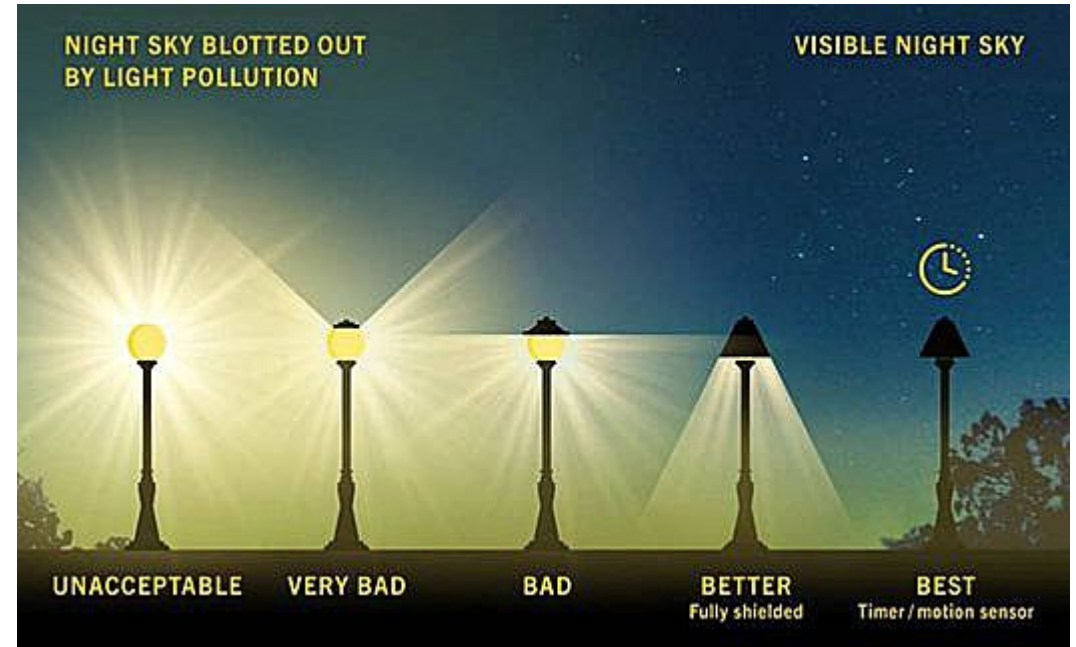


December Dreams • Ichetucknee Springs photo by John Moran

EPAC Selected Goals 2026

Land Use and Conservation

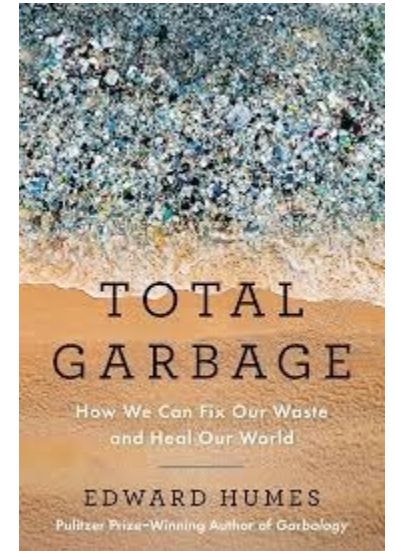
- Encourage policy makers to support Dark Sky approved luminaries program
- Support protection of our strategic ecosystems
- Support efforts to create large connected areas through both public and private ownership



Dark Sky Luminaries

Recycling and Waste Management

- Expand EPAC understanding of current waste management challenges and determine how best to contribute to finding solutions
- Encourage recycling of building materials
- Determine the fate of materials from construction/land clearing operations and suggest sustainable reuse strategies

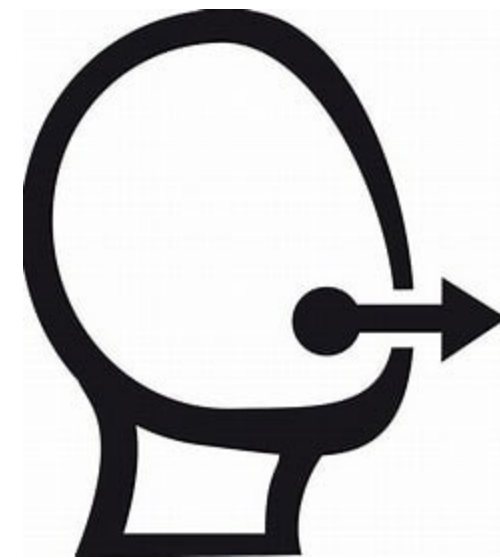


“You swallowed 285 pieces of plastic today”

Environmental Protection Advisory Committee Selected Goals 2026

Community Outreach

- Solicit community concerns about threats to our environment with development of a new program of listening
- Take the program to the people where they are (e.g. Farmer's Markets, community events, springs celebration)
- Collaborate with other organizations and committees to encourage sustainability programs such as agri-hoods and homegrown national park



Finally

The Committee Appreciates You

- Thank you for extending the EPAC sunset!
- All members are committed to thoughtfully and efficiently fulfilling EPAC's mission

