



Florida Springs Council Announces Ryan Smart as First Executive Director during Florida Springs Restoration Summit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 20, 2018

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Earlier this month, the Florida Springs Council hosted the Florida Springs Restoration Summit in Ocala, Florida. The biennial event featured presentations from scientists, springs advocates, and representatives of state and regional governmental agencies.

The resulting debate exposed the declining quality and tremendous needs of Florida's springs, as well as the lack of serious state action and funding to protect them. Attendees left with a renewed commitment to work together through the Florida Springs Council with our newly elected leaders for fair funding for North and Central Florida's springs and rivers and policies that stop pollution at the source and conserve water.

During the Summit, Florida Springs Council President Dan Hilliard announced that thanks to a generous grant from the Felburn Foundation, the Council had hired Ryan Smart as the Council's first Executive Director.

"Following the grand success of the Springs Summit and the hiring of Ryan Smart to lead our efforts, I think it is safe to say that the tide is turning, very much in our favor," said Hilliard.

Smart, who was honored for his environmental advocacy work as the 2017 University of Florida – Bob Graham Center Young Floridian of the Year, joins FSC after serving as the Director of the Florida Conservation Coalition and President of 1000 Friends of Florida.

"My goal as the Florida Springs Council's first executive director is to build the power, influence and resources of springs advocates across our state. We are putting those who pollute and abuse our springs on notice. No more. We are going to do whatever is necessary – through science, local governments, the Legislature, and the courts - to reverse the destruction of North Florida's springs and waters."

Florida Springs Council Legislative Chairman, Robert Palmer, Ph.D., said "The Council looks forward to working with our Legislators, Governor-elect DeSantis, and Commissioner-elect Fried to ensure that Florida's springs get the protection and funding needed, before Florida's environmental crisis worsens."

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Composed of 46 member groups and representing over 360,000 Floridians, the Florida Springs Council is the leading voice calling for the restoration of Florida's world-class springs and the protection of the Floridan aquifer.