

## **New division tasked with restoring the May River**

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A new division created by the town of Bluffton has one mission: prevent pollution and restore shellfishing in the May River.

The town's Division of Stormwater Management combines four staff members who all work on water-quality issues but do so in different departments.

The team is charged with executing the May River Watershed Action Plan drafted by consultants MacTec Engineering and Consulting. After public comments in June and July, the town is slated to adopt the plan in September, according to John Carmack, environmental sustainability engineer with the new division.

That plan includes a list of projects that aren't yet funded, according to stormwater engineer Ron Bullman. Mayor Lisa Sulka has said the town will have to make "tough decisions" to fund the plan once it is finalized but that Town Council is committed to cleaning up the May.

Bullman, who will lead the division, said in an email that the new division will save the town \$240,000 next fiscal year by performing work in-house that currently is contracted out to consultants or subcontractors. Those savings will be funneled to the division to handle additional responsibilities, such as expanded water-quality testing, Bullman said.

The division's proposed budget is being developed and will be presented to Town Council later this month, engineering director Bob Fletcher said.

The division, which also includes natural resources manager Kim Jones and environmental project technician Sam Connor, will report to Fletcher.