



# Florida Water Environment Association's Integrated Water Resource Professional of the Year Award Recipients

*The Integrated Water Resources Award is awarded to a water resources professional who has set an extraordinary record in Florida of achievement in making, designing and/or implementing water resources policy or projects at the local and the regional levels. Recipients of this award do not have to be an FWEA member.*

Year	Award Recipient	Organization <sup>1</sup>
2016	<a href="#">Ed Torres</a>	City of Altamonte Springs
2015	<a href="#">Norman Wellings</a>	Retired from the City of Boca Raton
2014	<a href="#">Traci Mercer</a>	City of Clearwater
2013	<a href="#">Sandra Fox</a>	St. Johns River Water Management District
2012	<a href="#">Liz Perez</a>	Brown & Caldwell
2011	<a href="#">Cammie Dewey</a>	St. Johns River Water Management District
2010	<a href="#">John Loper</a>	Interflow Engineering
2009	<a href="#">Nabil Muhaisen</a>	St. Johns River Water Management District
2008	<a href="#">Dr. Marty Wanielista</a>	University of Central Florida

## ED TORRES

The newly merged FWEA Water Resource, Reuse, and Resiliency (WR3) Committee presented its annual award for 2016 to Mr. Ed Torres of the City of Altamonte Springs at the FWEA Award Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2016 at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Kissimmee. Mr. Torres has over 25 years of experience in the management and implementation of a wide variety of water resources and public works projects. His strong leadership and management skills have been demonstrated throughout his career but most notable during his recent tenure as the Director of Public Works and Utilities for the City of Altamonte Springs the past 6 years. His strong leadership skills coupled with his stormwater, reclaimed water and transportation project background came together when he implemented the City's Altamonte-FDOT Integrated Reuse and Stormwater Treatment (A-FIRST) project. The A-FIRST project is the first of its kind in the nation that involves these unique partnerships and brings together elements of stormwater management, water supply and environmental protection to provide a truly integrated approach to providing flood protection, alternative water supply and nutrient loading reduction. The project was first conceived by Ed's predecessor, but as is often the case, all elements didn't align to move a great project forward. In 2013, under Ed's leadership and vision, the project was re-energized and gained momentum to become fully operational in just two year. It now serves as a model for other future projects in Florida and the country.



## NORMAN WELLINGS

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its annual award for 2015 to Mr. Norman Wellings at the FWEA Awards Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2015 at the Renaissance Orlando Hotel at SeaWorld. Norm has 40 years of experience in the water and wastewater industry. Starting as a wastewater package plant operator at a young age, he worked hard to become the division head of the water, wastewater and reclaimed water treatment facilities at the City of Boca Raton Utility Services Department. Norm retired in April from the City, but through his efforts made a remarkable impact on the Utility Services Department as well as the water & wastewater industry. He is leaving a tremendous legacy behind. His award-winning talent will be missed.

## TRACI MERCER, MBA

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its annual award for 2014 to Ms. Traci Mercer at the FWEA Awards Luncheon held at the FWRC in April 2014 at the Walt Disney World Coronado Springs Resort & Convention Center. Ms. Mercer began working for the City of Clearwater eight years ago as the Public Utilities Director. Her 30-year career entails management of operations, maintenance and capital improvement projects of



<sup>1</sup> Organization working for at the time of award nomination.

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several or all departments within a respective municipality or county. Her diverse duties and experiences have helped create for her an open mind that quickly analyses situations, personalities and the larger scheme of challenges. As director, she carries the ultimate responsibility of three enterprise utilities encompassing water supply, treatment and distribution; wastewater collection, advanced wastewater treatment and reclaimed water, for 108,000 residents and nearly as many visitors annually. Ms. Mercer's holistic approach of water management exemplifies the term 'integrated water resources'. Her brainchild, called MoM, is a dynamic group of local, municipal utility professionals in north Pinellas County, who share ideas on water utility related technologies, regulations, training, policies and experiences. MoM stands for "Meeting of the Minds", and the concept has just been submitted for several industry and governmental awards due to the collective, positive outcomes of the various member utilities from monthly group discussions and continuous sharing.

### SANDRA FOX

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its annual award for 2013 to Ms. Sandra Fox at the FWEA Awards Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2013. Sandra is an environmental scientist at the St Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) specializing in regional-scale geospatial analyses and data development. Current projects range from improving LiDAR data in floodplain wetlands to using GIS and remote sensing to model environmental impacts of management decisions including restoration efforts. Her work evaluating wetland hydroperiod was integral to the wetlands impact assessment for the recent SJRWMD Water Supply Impact Study of which she is a co-author. As part of a statewide effort evaluating the Arc Hydro data model for water management, she developed the first Districtwide Arc Hydro prototype geodatabase that led to the development of SJRWMD's enterprise water resources geodatabase. She has organized workshops for the Florida Arc Hydro Users Group and she was the general chair for the VI American Water Resources Association specialty conferences "GIS and Water Resources" bringing national leaders in water resources geospatial technology to Florida. She is currently the associate editor for geospatial analyses for the Journal of the American Water Resources Association.

### ELIZABETH PEREZ

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its annual award for 2012 to Ms. Liz Perez at the FWEA Awards Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2012. Ms. Perez co-authored "Water Supply and Pollution Control (8th Edition)", co-Authored ASCE Book: "The Status of State Water Resources Planning in the United States 2005", and served as Editor and Co-Author of ASCE Book: "The Role of Technology in Water Resources Planning and Management". She serves as the Chair of the Water Resources Planning Committee of the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers and is a Diplomat for AAWRE. One of her most memorable projects was revising the stormwater manual for Sarasota County, Florida.



### CAMMIE DEWEY, P.E.

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its Annual Award for 2011 to Ms. Cammie Dewey, P.E., of the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) at the FWEA Award Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2011 at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Kissimmee. Ms. Dewey is the Director of the Division of Surface Water Management at the SJRWMD. She has 22 years of experience with the SJRWMD, which includes nearly 17 years in regulation and 5 years on the Lake Apopka Restoration Project. She specializes in site-hydrology, stormwater runoff and stormwater runoff treatment mechanisms and water quality. She has helped design and oversee projects being built for the Lake Apopka Restoration Project.

### JOHN LOPER, P.E.

The FWEA Integrated Water Resources Committee (IWRC) presented its new 2010 IWR Award to Mr. John Loper, P.E., president of Interflow Engineering, LLC, at the FWEA Award Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2010 at the Renaissance Orlando Hotel at SeaWorld. Mr. Loper has over 15 years of experience in the field of water resources and is known for his technical excellence in the areas of groundwater modeling, watershed planning, and permitting. Mr. Loper is also known for his leadership role as one of the founders and early chairs of the Stormwater Committee, the predecessor to the IWRC.



### NABIL MUHAISEN, P.E.

The Stormwater Committee presented its then called 2009 Stormwater Award to Mr. Nabil Muhaisen at the FWEA Award Luncheon held at the FWRC in 2009. Mr. Muhaisen is the water resources compliance engineer in charge of Orange and Volusia counties at the St. Johns River Water Management District in Altamonte



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Springs/Orlando. He has over 20 years of experience in water resource engineering, working with the District's Environmental Resources and Management of Storage and Surface Water Regulatory Programs. Mr. Muhaisen was instrumental in developing ties with other professional associations, which resulted in three Biannual Stormwater Conferences. He set new FWEA attendance and profit records with his collaboration efforts as a result of the third Biannual Stormwater Conference in 2002. Mr. Muhaisen is the founder of the FWEA Florida Watershed Journal.

### MARTY WANIELISTA, PHD

The Stormwater Committee presented its then called 2008 Stormwater Award to Dr. Marty Waniellista at the FWEA Award Luncheon held at the FWRC in May 2008 in Tampa. Dr. Marty Waniellista, nicknamed "the grandfather of stormwater," spends one hour a day "thinking about what we've done wrong, what we've done right, and writing these down as items for the future. Passionate about green roofs, stormwater reuse, and pervious pavement, he has 50 years of stormwater research to his credit. Dr. Waniellista is a University of Central Florida professor emeritus. He directs the Stormwater Management Academy, a research source for education and training programs in nationwide partnership with governments, non-governmental organizations, and industry.

