



Lake County WATER AUTHORITY

— POSITION AVAILABLE —

Executive Director | Apply by March 17, 2023



Lake County is located in Central Florida about 30 minutes west and north of Orlando. It is known for its natural beauty and outdoor recreational activities. Nature-lovers find an abundance of options from hiking through endless acres of preserves to viewing rare birds and/or paddling pristine waterways. Anglers are lured by the prospect of catching a trophy bass, while treasure hunters will enjoy finding that rare antique at the area's many unique downtown districts. Ecotourism, agritourism, sea-plane excursions, heritage museums and art galleries, sporting events, golfing, cycling and hiking trails, entertainment venues, spa getaways and equestrian farms make Lake County a true destination.

Aptly named, Lake County contains over a thousand lakes and acres of preserves, state parks and a national forest full of flora and fauna. Many of the lakes are connected making for fascinating boating, kayaking and canoeing. From sightings of rare grazing manatees to

observations of Florida’s endemic scrub jay, residents and tourists alike enjoy wildlife that thrive in the wet environment. The fishing is outstanding and the site of many tournaments. At William’s Landing, people can take boat tours along the St. Johns River (which runs all the way to Jacksonville). Avid hikers seeking trails can choose between two major forests sitting on opposite corners of the County—the Lake Louisa State Park in the southeast and the Ocala National Forest in the northernmost tip. Visitors can camp, hike, ride horses, or bird watch in undisturbed lands where protected species like the gopher tortoise and aforementioned Florida scrub jay peacefully reside. Sugarloaf Mountain, north of Minneola, is a popular destination and the highest point in Florida at 312 feet. Triathlon athletes like to train here due to the elevation changes and water bodies. For those who like the beach, Lake County is ideally situated. Depending on where you live, you can be as little as 35 miles from Daytona Beach or 55 miles to a beach on the Gulf of Mexico.

For those who golf, you won’t find a better location. The County has 28 courses, and the City of Clermont is a favorite for golfers, hosting numerous collegiate championships at the Mission Inn, Howey in the Hills.

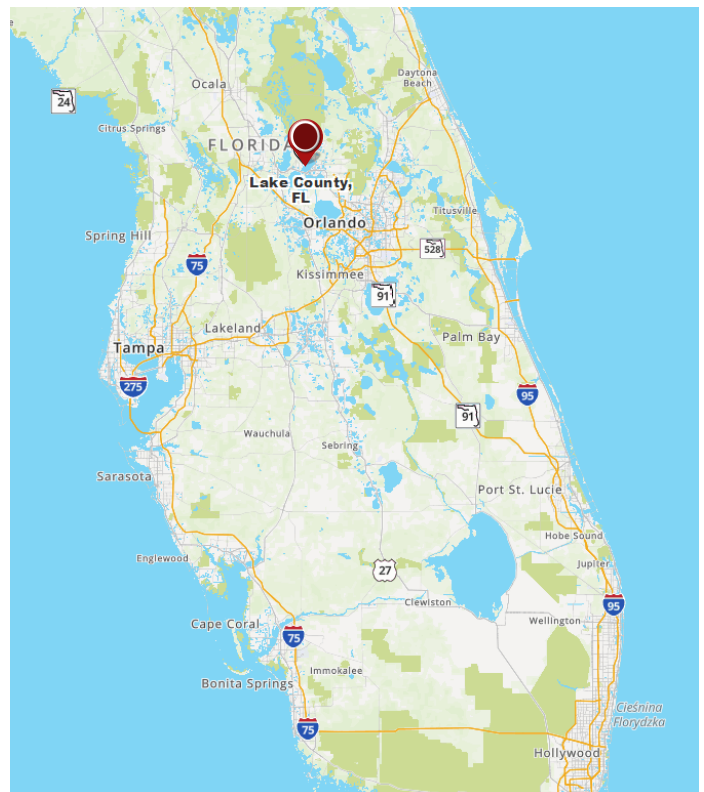
Being relatively close to Orlando, Lake County is growing rapidly and has become a popular place for commuters to reside. In 1970, the population was approximately 70,000. In 2021, it was almost 396,000. That is an average growth rate of 40% per decade. Its cities are many (14 in all) and varied. Further, (GreatRetirementSpots.com has recognized a number of the County’s cities (Eustis, Clermont, Tavares, Lady Lake and Mount Dora) as wonderful places to retire.

Eustis is known for its iconic historic downtown. Mount Dora is one of Florida’s prettiest towns and is

reminiscent of a quaint New England lakeside village. It is known for its many festivals—averaging approximately two per month. For example, each February, the City hosts the two day Mount Dora Arts Festival (considered one of the top art shows in the country) drawing 300,000 visitors. Two weeks later is Renninger’s Antique Extravaganza and then a day or two later is the Annual Scottish Highland Festival. Lady Lake, a historic Florida city, includes a section of the Villages (an internationally regarded retirement community).

Leesburg’s annual three-day Bikefest is the world’s largest motorcycle and music event. Nearby Tavares is known as “America’s Seaplane Base” for its commitment to pontoon aircraft and for its Seaplane Base, which is a city-owned, public-use seaplane base on Lake Dora. It is the county seat and hosts an entertainment district that has an international assortment of restaurants, pubs and music venues.

Figure 1: Location of Lake County, FL



Visitors stop for lunch, and often stay for the weekend. They can enjoy a boat tour, take a seaplane ride, glimpse long-gone historical figures on the Séance Ghost Tours, or ride the Orange Blossom Cannonball, an original 1907 steam engine.

Clermont is the County's largest city (population 35,000 and up from 9,300 in 2000). It won the 2018 City Spirit Award for its Oakhurst effort which showcased efforts between police, volunteers, and residents to turn the Oakhurst neighborhood into a beautiful and safe community.

For those who value theme parks, about 40 miles southeast lie Disney World, SeaWorld and Universal Studios. Bush Gardens in Tampa is 65 miles to the southwest. Legoland Park and Resort lie an hour and 20 minutes to the south. For the professional sports aficionado, Orlando offers the NBA's Magic, as well as both major league men's and women's professional soccer teams. The Tampa Bay area is home to the NFL's Buccaneers, the MLB's Rays, the NHL's Lightning and several other minor league affiliates. For the college fan, the famed University of Florida is just 90 miles north with all of its nationally recognized programs while the University of Central Florida and South Florida are even closer.

Cultural opportunities abound nearby. Among Orlando's many venues are the Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orlando Museum of Art, the Bob Carr Performing Arts Center, and the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. In the other direction, Tampa offers the Tampa Museum of Art and Straz Center for the Performing Arts as well as a host of others. For those interested in things beyond this world, the NASA Kennedy Space Center is about 100 miles east.

If you like to travel, it's 40 miles to Orlando International Airport, or for a low-cost carrier, it is 60

miles to Orlando Sanford International Airport where Allegiant has a hub. Tampa International Airport is 75 miles to the southwest. The world's second busiest cruise port in terms of passenger volume is Port Canaveral and only 85 miles away on Florida's east coast.

Lake County, though, is not just about activities and places. It is about people, and is a place that residents genuinely love to call home. They are a diverse mixture of new arrivals and very much old Florida. The County's motto is "Real Florida, Real Close," after all. In some locations, on the street you can hear multiple languages (for example, English, Spanish, Hindi, Chinese or something else) in a few short blocks. In other locations you may hear a Florida twang. The important thing is they get along and value each other. Neighbors help neighbors and welcome newcomers. Regardless of your background, people are friendly. In many ways, Lake County seems to be a small town where everyone knows—and cares about—everyone else.

Living here, you will find almost three-quarters of residents own their homes. Currently, the housing market favors sellers, and the median home selling price is \$369,000. Based on a year-over-year trend, Realtor has calculated a 21.7% increase of house listing prices as of August 2022. Zillow similarly has found home values increased about 19% between August 2021 and August 2022. Lake County is relatively safe, receiving a rating in the 85th percentile for "safety from Crime" Grade.

The County hosts a number of public and private schools. GreatSchools.com rates its public schools as good and higher. That said, many Lake County students face challenges. Over one third of students are economically disadvantaged and/or eligible for free lunches. While public school tests scores are slightly below state averages in reading and math,



students who apply themselves can get an outstanding education here. The Lake County School District boasts excellent student to teacher ratios (17:1) and graduation rates of (87%). For individuals seeking higher education, Lake-Sumter College has campuses in Leesburg and Clermont while Lake Technical College is located in Eustis. Students only need to drive an hour to study at the University of Central Florida (the largest public university by attendance in the United States) in Orlando or the University of Florida in Gainesville.

All in all, Lake County offers wonderful recreational, cultural and personal opportunities in addition to being the Executive Director of the Lake County Water Authority. So, if you are interested, please dust off your resume and apply.

HISTORY

Created in 1887, Lake County was formed from parts of Orange and Sumter Counties. Originally, Lake County industry focused on farming, lumber, cotton, and citrus. Around the 1940s, citrus production became more successful and more heavily emphasized until two consecutive freezes in the 1990s ruined crops and farmers' hopes of recovery. Since then, many of the groves have been sold to developers. Sod farming also became relatively commonplace.

Table 1: Lake County Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	70.2%	0 to 15	15.5%
Black	10.3%	15 to 25	10.1%
Asian	2.2%	25 to 45	21.8%
Other/2 or More Races	17%	45 to 65	25.7%
Total	100%	65 to 85	23.7%
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	17%	85 +	3.3%
Estimated Population: 383,956			

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
High School or Higher	89.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	25.3%

Other Statistics	
Median Age—Lake County	47.1
Median Age—U.S.	38.5
Median Household Income Lake County	\$57,558
Median Household Income—U.S.	\$61,937
Poverty Rate	11.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In 1953, Florida Legislature created the Ocklawaha Basin Recreation and Water Conservation and Control Authority to protect and conserve the County’s water resources and wildlife. In 2000, Florida Legislature officially changed the agency’s name to the Lake County Water Authority. During the interim, the County’s recreational lakes and waterways had deteriorated, primarily due to agricultural runoff. Since 2000, the Authority has been quite effective and the streams, lakes and aquatic wildlife have largely recovered. The result is bass fishing tournaments, once a tourism mainstay, are returning, and the area is again becoming recognized as a fisherman’s and outdoor paradise.

Lake County Water Authority headquarters and primary site is situated in the City of Tavares, between Lake Harris and Little Lake Harris. The office building is just west of SR-19.

DEMOGRAPHICS

As noted, Lake County has grown significantly in recent years, and some of its cities, in particular. For example, between 2010 and 2021, Groveland’s population increased by 11,781 residents (135%) and Clermont increased by 15,559 (54.1%).

CLIMATE

Generally, Lake County has a humid, subtropical climate with two main seasons. From May to September, the county experiences a hot and rainy season. During these summer months, high temperatures are typically in the 90’s and rarely fall below the mid-70’s. Frequently, afternoons bring short bursts of rain and thunder. Between October and April, the season becomes drier. In the winter, the weather is mild with average temperatures in the 60’s with lows in the 40’s.

Average annual rainfall ranges between 47 to 53 inches, with most occurring June to October. Snow is exceptionally rare here. Although hurricanes sometimes hit Florida, these storms are relatively rare with limited impact, particularly this far from the coast. Further, hurricanes will probably not materially affect areas located more than 50 miles from the storm’s center.

GEOGRAPHY

The geographical center of peninsular Florida, Lake County is 1,157 square miles. Land comprises 954 square miles, and water makes up the remaining 203 square miles. The average elevation is 184 feet above

Table 2: Principal Employers, Lake County, FL

Employer	Industry	Employees
Lake County Public Schools	Education	5,648
Publix Supermarkets Inc	Retail	2,238
Lake County Government	Government	2,059
Advent Health Waterman	Healthcare	1,730
UF Health Central Florida	Healthcare	1,705
Orlando Health South Lake Hospital	Healthcare	1,431
Villages of Lake-Sumpter, Inc.	Senior Care & Residential	946
Lowe's	Retail	698
Lifestream Behavioral Center	Healthcare	628
Home Depot	Retail	524

Source: Lake County, FL 2020 CAFR

sea level. Lake County is different from much of the rest of Florida (which is relatively flat) in that it does have hills and changes in elevation.

COMMERCE

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners is determined to create a robust and healthy economy for its citizens and businesses. As such, it places a great deal of emphasis on being business-friendly and on contributing significant resources to economic development and job growth. The County's principal employers are listed above in Table II.

THE AUTHORITY

The Lake County Water Authority's legislative mandate is to: (1) Control and conserve the freshwater resources of Lake County; (2) Foster improvements to streams, lakes, and canals in the county; (3) Improve the fish and aquatic wildlife of the county by improving the streams, lakes, and canals in the county; and (4) Protect the freshwater

resources of Lake County through assisting local governments in treating stormwater runoff.

The Authority is a subdivision of the state of Florida and a dependent special district. With the legislation just passed HB1105, the Water Authority is now part of the Lake County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) government but it levies its own tax (up to 0.5 mills). A five member Board of Trustees appointed by the BCC acts as the governing body. All five of its members represent geographic

districts All of the Trustees serve staggered two and four year terms. They are limited to two consecutive terms. In 2024, two will term out. Appointments occur in November of even numbered years. The Board selects a chair and vice chair from among its members at the first meeting in December of each year. Trustees are paid \$12,000/yr. when performing their duties and meet more than once a month. Trustees's interest is protecting Lake County's waters and not as a steppingstone to higher office. The Board is collegial and members respect each other. It is also respectful of the staff and feels they have done a good job of carrying out the Authority's mission.

The day-to-day operations of the Authority are overseen by an Executive Director (who cannot be a member of the Board). The Clerk of the Circuit Court of Lake County acts as secretary and treasurer of the board. The Authority's FY 2022-2023 general fund budget is \$13.6 million, and its total budget is \$22.4 million. Overall, the Authority has 14 full time employees. See Figure 2 for details.

The Authority's four divisions have a variety of responsibilities which are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Water Resources Division is responsible for implementing projects that improve the water quality and natural systems of Lake County. Part of its duties includes ensuring water levels in South Lake County and the Clermont Chain of Lakes remain within specified levels.

Natural Resources Division oversees the efforts to conserve and protect the LCWA's 7,700 acres of unique and irreplaceable land and water resources. Since 1990, the program has made these conservation lands available for compatible recreational uses such as hiking, primitive camping, paddling, birdwatching, picnicking, horseback riding, geocaching and fishing.

The Authority has two other divisions, the Administration Division and the Field Services Division that support the preceding three divisions. The staff are also augmented by four Lake County Sheriff's Office deputies who patrol the lakes and waterways.

It is important to note that the LCWA Water Authority is neither a regulatory agency nor a water utility and has no power to issue permits or enforce regulations. In fact, it works closely with other local governments and governmental agencies to accomplish its mission. These include cities, Lake County, the Lake County Sheriff's Office, the water management districts, and state offices such as the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Lake County Water Authority is a well-run agency and is financially stable. Its staff is well qualified, and the agency has a great deal of grass roots support in the community. That said, it does have a few issues. The first is a bill has been approved (HB1105) by the Florida legislature to make the Authority a dependent district of Lake County BCC. The motivation is to increase governmental efficiency. Staff is currently working with the BCC to get an agreement in place to provide the Water Authority services like HR, Procurement, IT and Budget. The current Board was be appointed by the County Commission in November 2022 and the Authority's Executive Director will continue to run the day-to-day and it will remain the same.

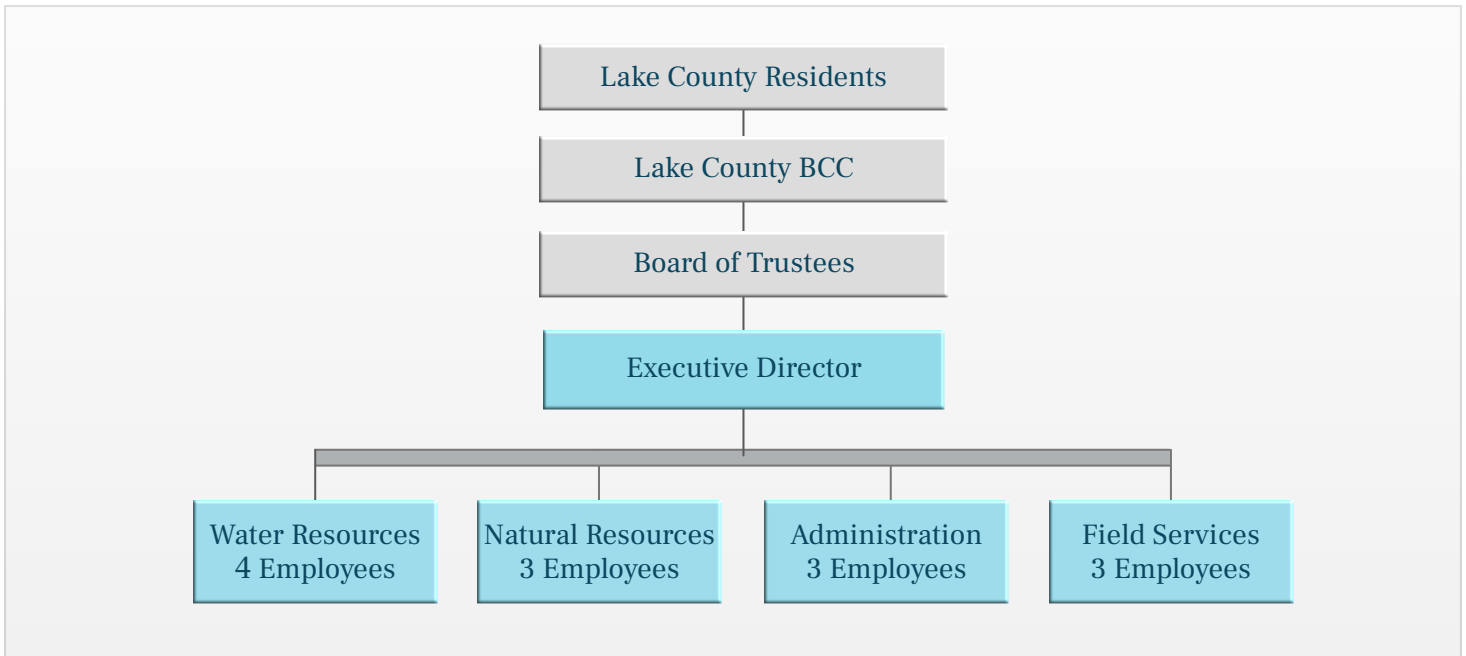
The second challenge is growth. As noted, development has been very strong in Lake County. With it comes challenges to the water quality from run-off and from usage of the waterways.

The third challenge is related to the first challenge. The adoption of the transition and the retirement of the most recent Executive Director will be challenging for agency and its staff. The right Executive Director should be able to quickly adapt.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Board is looking for an outstanding leader and manager to partner with to continue the organization's tradition of excellence. The ideal candidate will have experience in water quality and environmental management. The Executive Director will be a strategic thinker, always preparing for the future and anticipating its impact on LCWA. He/she will see the big picture but not neglect the details. The

Figure 2: Lake County Water Authority Organization Chart



individual will lead by example and not expect to spend all day behind a desk. LCWA is a relatively small agency, and everyone needs to pitch in. The individual will be a people person and passionate about what the organization does and live its mission. Good judgment and common sense are essential.

The best candidate will be someone who is familiar with reporting to a governing board. He/she will know the importance of keeping them informed and building consensus. The individual will present options and make recommendations but also recognize the Board makes the final decision. The ideal candidate will have excellent oral, written and listening skills and communicate well with all levels of the economic strata. The individual will be a promoter. LCWA has a great story and it needs to be heard. He/she will be particularly strong in intergovernmental relations as the Authority must interface with many others to accomplish its mission.

The Board is seeking someone who is intelligent, upbeat, friendly, outgoing, organized, and positive—

someone with an open mind and a can-do attitude. The individual will also be flexible, cheerfully persistent, energetic yet calm, and a leader—not a bureaucrat. Integrity and transparency will be core principles as well as fairness and consistency. He/she will also understand politics (particularly at the local but also the state level), but not be involved.

The individual will be approachable and part of the community, always listening and always looking for ways to make the Authority more effective. He/she will be analytical and trust his/her staff, delegate, and encourage creativity. The ideal candidate will recognize talent and mentor that talent. He/she will challenge employees to give their best and set broad performance parameters. The individual will not be a micromanager but after setting goals, step back and let staff members do their jobs. Of course, he/she will expect results and hold employees accountable. At the same time, it will not be all about business. The individual will have a good sense of humor and a heart. He/she will realize the importance of making the workplace not just challenging but enjoyable.

The Authority's staff is small and the ability to multitask is critical. The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated ability to work with the media. In terms of specific skills, the individual will have a demonstrated track record of achievement in management, finance, water quality and environmental issues. The ability to apply for and obtain grants is important.

The selected candidate will be expected to make a commitment to LCWA. This position should not be viewed as a steppingstone but as a gem in its own right. The Authority expects the next Executive Director to stay at least five years.

The ideal candidate will have a bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, environmental science, or related field and five to seven years of increasingly responsible experience as a governmental manager. Knowledge of Florida and extreme weather events is a plus.

COMPENSATION

Although salary will depend on experience and qualifications, the last Executive Director was paid approximately \$135,000 annually. It is anticipated that the next Executive Director will have a similar salary. Benefits are very good, and the Executive Director will be part of the Florida Retirement System.

RESIDENCY

The Executive Director is expected to establish residence in Lake County within six months of starting work for the Authority.

THE PRIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The most recent Executive Director is retiring after two years on the job and 24 years with the Authority.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

We do not anticipate any internal candidates.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Under Florida's public records act, once an application is submitted, it is deemed a public record. As a practical matter, the Executive Director position is relatively low profile, and we would be surprised if this search received any media coverage.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume and cover letter to Recruit22@cb-asso.com by March 17th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Stephen Sorrell at (513) 317-0678.

THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between March 18th and April 16th. Finalists will be selected on April 27th. Interviews will be held on May 18th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Lake County Water Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the Authority, visit:

www.lcwa.org

www.lakecountyfl.gov

www.visitlakefl.com

We particularly recommend reviewing the LCWA's 2020 Annual Report and 2021-2025 Five Year Plan, which can be found on the Authority's website.

