

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

March 20, 2023



### **Okaloosa County making preparations for possible sargassum accumulation**

**Okaloosa County, Florida** – We understand there have been reports of a large amount of sargassum seaweed headed towards Florida. There is currently no sargassum on Destin-Fort Walton beaches, but we are making preparations if seaweed accumulations reach excessive levels.

As you are probably aware, algae and seagrasses are naturally occurring in the marine environment worldwide. They are also an important ecosystem for marine life like sea turtles and small fish. While we have typically allowed nature to dispose of sargassum on our beaches, we are prepared to utilize properly permitted tools on our beach to remove the seaweed if needed.

Additionally, there are currently no detectable amounts of red tide in the waterways around Destin-Fort Walton Beach. Water samples are being collected by the Tourism Development Department and Department of Health (independent of each other) then provided to Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for processing.

###

OKALOOSA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER NICK TOMECEK  
(850) 585-7059 | [OCPIO@MYOKALOOSA.COM](mailto:OCPIO@MYOKALOOSA.COM)