

LOXAHATCHEE GROVES WATER CONTROL DISTRICT
DISTRICT ENGINEER'S ANNUAL REPORT
JUNE 2007 - MAY 2008

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District (District) is responsible for drainage, flood control and protection, water management and reclamation of lands, and road maintenance and improvements within its boundaries. The District's boundaries extend from 162nd Drive North to Folsom Road and from Southern Boulevard (SR 80) to one-half mile north of North Road. Pursuant to Florida Statutes Chapter 298, its Water Control Plan and enabling legislation, Chapters 99-425 and 2004-410, Laws of Florida, the District owns, constructs, operates and maintains the works of the District, regulates their use by others, contracts for the construction, operation and maintenance of the works of the District by others and controls, condemns or otherwise acquires lands. Works of the District include public rights-of-way for canals and roads within the District's benefitted area, levees, gated water control structures and pumping stations.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS:

The recently incorporated Town of Loxahatchee Groves and the District remain separate governmental entities. Service delivery to the landowners within their overlapping boundaries is not duplicated. The District continues to provide storm drainage, road maintenance and road improvement services. The Town is responsible for those services formerly provided by Palm Beach County prior to incorporation such as land use planning, zoning, and building regulation, code enforcement, traffic control regulations, and police protection. The District and Town governments complement one another and are anticipated to continue working together as described in the Town's Charter well into the future.

The District has cultivated a network of close relationships with Federal, State, and Local government agencies over the last several years, including Palm Beach County Engineering, Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department, Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Several millions of dollars in revenue have been received from these various agencies to offset significant increases in the District's maintenance assessment while also enabling it to fund special projects that otherwise would have been impossible to achieve. These projects have added value to the District's service delivery and benefitted many landowners through increased property values. These projects and their respective funding amounts are summarized below:

Shellrock Placed on 38 miles of District and non-District roads	\$900,000.00
Open Grade Emulsion (OGEM) stabilizing 4.5 miles of road surface	\$640,000.00
Dust Abatement on 29 miles of unpaved road surface	\$90,000.00
New road maintenance equipment	\$60,000.00
Equestrian trails along 4 miles of District right-of-way	\$90,000.00
Hurricane mitigation and improvements projects	\$400,000.00
<u>North Road Canal Improvements</u>	<u>\$1,700,000.00</u>
TOTAL VALUE-ADDED PROJECT FUNDING	\$3,880,000.00

Looking toward the future, the Town of Loxahatchee Groves has indicated it will receive as much as \$200,000.00 in shared gas tax revenues next fiscal year. The District anticipates receiving this revenue from the Town for the 2008-2009 budget year to fund a portion of the District's statutory road maintenance obligation.

CANAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS:

The District established a rotational Canal Maintenance and Drainage Improvement Plan in 1998 that has allocated funding for the creation and restoration of the District's canal system. This year, the District initiated the cleaning and reshaping of North Road Canal from "A" Road Canal to "E" Road Canal through an interlocal agreement with Palm Beach County. Work included the removal of all encroaching vegetation, dredging and removal of several feet of silt from the canal section. This effort has increased subbasin drainage capacity which translates into greater flood protection and higher property values for the benefitted landowners.

The North Road Canal improvements have been and continue to be funded and administered by the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department in conjunction with their North Region Utility Improvement Project. The project was delayed for more than nine months due to County budget constraints and legal issues with the utility contractor. This work including the replacement of nine (9) failing bridges, thirty (30) landowner drainage culverts, roadway improvements (new shell rock), and an equestrian trail, should commence with a new contractor on June 25, 2008 and be completed by January 2009. Total "value-added" services to the District's landowners will exceed \$1.5 million. To understand and appreciate the significance of this large revenue source, the amount exceeds the District's entire road and canal systems maintenance budgets for next fiscal year.

Unlike the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, the South Florida region has experienced relatively little tropical storm activity for the last two years. Unfortunately, the region has also experienced significant drought conditions where rainfall has been less than average. A condition that could be mitigated with above average rainfalls typically associated with tropical storm systems.

Drought conditions continued throughout the past year. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) issued emergency orders on December 13, 2007 affecting all diversion and impoundment permittees, including the District, requiring a 50% reduction in water allocated from the C-51 Canal. In response, the District filed and received approval from SFWMD for a variance from the imposed restrictions shortly after the water restriction order was issued. The approved variance application allowed the District to pump 50% more than the restricted amount (75% of the District's permitted allocation) on the basis of maintaining sufficient canal water surface levels to provide life-sustaining fire protection source water for the Loxahatchee Groves community.

ROAD MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS:

The District placed 4,700 tons of new base rock on North Road from "A" Road to "E" Road (2.0 miles) in August 2007. The total cost for this project was \$78,700.00 and reflects an increase in material and hauling costs of over 15% from last year's road improvement project. The Board of

Supervisors entered into an interlocal agreement with Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department that provided the funding for these improvements and other transportation-related expenditures. This value-added revenue source is just one example of many other windfalls that the District has obtained to offset projected shortfalls in its annual road maintenance and improvement budget for the last five years.

Interlocal agreements between the County and District provided \$539,000.00 in funding for four road stabilization projects. Open Graded Emulsified Mix (OGEM) stabilization is a cold-mix process that blends 3/4" gravel with a coal-tar epoxy and produces a road surface similar in appearance and surface texture as hot-mix asphalt. Marcella Boulevard, Compton Road, "F" Road (north of Okeechobee Boulevard) and "F" Road (south of Okeechobee Boulevard) were all stabilized with OGEM. Product performance, related maintenance requirement, and costs are currently being evaluated. Four other District road sections may be scheduled for OGEM stabilization in response to road improvement petitions submitted by affected landowners. These petitions were received by the Board of Supervisors who then directed Staff to send survey letters with estimated costs for OGEM stabilization to the affected landowners to determine their interest in paying for the improvements. Should a majority of landowners respond favorably to paying for the improvements to be constructed, the Board of Supervisors may then arrange for the creation of a special taxing district to be formed through the District's referendum process.

General maintenance to all District roads, including the placement of specified base material occurred throughout the year. Total base rock purchased by the District and placed on District rights-of-way this year (excluding the North Road Project) was 5,800 tons. District Staff also provided weekly road maintenance service on all District roads equivalent to over 3,200 miles of road surface being graded and watered last year.

Throughout the past year, all District roads were cleared of encroaching vegetation. District Staff continues to provide this work internally; thus, saving the District several thousands of dollars annually by not contracting with an outside entity.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

Although drought conditions restricted permitted water use allocation last year, the District still pumped 722.2 million gallons of water from the C-51 Canal to replenish District canal levels this year. The District's water use permit from the South Florida Water Management District allows an annual maximum allocation of 1.474 billion gallons of water. Conversely, the District received and managed over 76.9 inches of rainfall during the year. The total annual rainfall amount equates to 16.7 billion gallons of water; enough water to provide a year's supply of drinking water for over 140,000 Palm Beach County homes. This volume represents an increase in recorded rainfall over the previous year of 44%.

The District's revised and updated Public Facilities Report for 2008 was prepared and submitted to Palm Beach County as required, per Section 189.415, Florida Statutes.

This year there were a total of one (1) drainage connection permits, one (1) bridge culvert permit (time extension), and two (2) right-of-way utility permits issued by the District. There were also two (2) courtesy grading petitions received and filed by the Board of Supervisors.

For the fourth year in a row, the District received two awards of excellence for "Vehicle Safety" and "Worker Safety" from the Palm Beach County Safety Council. The dedication and teamwork of the District's employees and their commitment to adhering to the District's safety policies and procedures is directly attributable to having incurred zero accidents and zero injuries for the last four years.

Respectfully submitted,
LOXAHATCHEE GROVES WATER CONTROL DISTRICT

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. Saunier".

Clete J. Saunier, P.E.
District Engineer

CJS/lrb