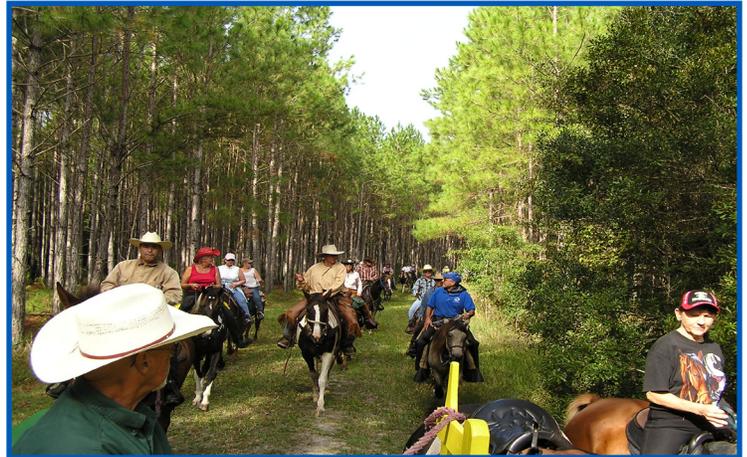


R.O. Ranch Hosts “Git-R-Done” Trail Ride

In celebration of Mayo Pioneer Days, the R.O. Ranch hosted an 18-mile trail ride that attracted more than 40 equestrian lovers from all over the country. Participants saddled up their horses or wagons and toured the Lafayette County country side as the pioneers would have years ago. The ranch was open for primitive camping during this event and several riders and campers stayed on the property.



Equestrian lovers participate in R.O. Ranch’s “Git-R-Done” trail ride. More than 40 participants enjoyed the weekend festivities.

Mayo Pioneer Days a Success

R.O. Ranch sponsored two wagons in the parade including the wagon carrying the “Granny and Pappy,” Dorothy Massey and Willie Jones. Another wagon was added this year to honor long-time residents of Lafayette County and represent “1,000 years of Lafayette County History.”

R.O. Ranch is a 2,500-acre equestrian center being developed in Lafayette County by the District and R.O. Ranch, Inc. For more information on the ranch, please visit www.roranch.org.



R.O. Ranch Manager Ron Clayton drives the wagon that holds Lafayette County residents and represents “1,000 Years of Lafayette County History.”

Board Adopts \$69.8M Budget; No Increase in Millage or Staff

The approved budget calls for a millage rate of 0.4399 mills. This rate remains unchanged from FY 2007-08. The District’s staffing level will remain at 68 for the 18th consecutive year.

This year’s budget highlights several programs of interest to the District including:

- Implementation of The Ichetucknee Partnership (TIP) to support wise springshed management within the Ichetucknee Springshed.
- Update and automation of digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps through funding provided by FEMA.
- Continued funding for the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail, R.O. Ranch equestrian center and restoration projects.
- Continued support for the Suwannee River Partnership cost-share program to aid farmers in protecting springs and other water resources through reducing nutrient loads and improving water conservation.

Work will continue to establish minimum flows and levels (MFLs) for rivers and springs, as will data collection for the District’s rainfall, groundwater and surface water monitoring networks.



Pratt Street Project Almost Complete

The drainage infrastructure, ponds, roadway reconstruction and clean up have been completed. Once the control structure is complete, the engineer of record can certify the as-built plans. Some minor changes to the control structure will be reflected in revised as-built plans. The sidewalk installation along Pratt Street is basically complete except for the installation of ADA detectors and cross walks. A final inspection is scheduled for early December 2008.

Suwannee River Partnership Update

The Suwannee River Partnership focuses on finding the most economical and technologically feasible management techniques (best management practices, or BMPs) available to help farmers satisfy regulatory requirements for protecting public health and the environment. The Partnership has successfully implemented BMP programs developed for dairy farms, poultry farms and most recently crop farms.

Implementing the crop BMP manual requires a farmer to update or change existing practices that do not meet the manual's standards. The implementation of these practices is made possible by updating crop management tools and technology. Proof that the Partnership approach works:

- As of March 2008, BMP evaluations have been conducted for 250 farms totaling 123,191 acres. The overall average size of these farms is 492.7 acres.
- Since 2006 over 320 irrigation systems have been retrofitted to save water.
- According to mobile irrigation lab studies, up to 8 million gallons of water is saved per retrofit and as much as a billion gallons of water has been saved each crop season since 2006.



SRWMD First Public Entity in Florida to Receive SFI Certification



The Suwannee River Water Management District is pleased to announce that it is the first public entity in the state of Florida to receive certification of its lands under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Standard. A third-party audit was completed in July and found that the District was in conformance with the standard on all of its 160,000 acres of fee-owned lands.

Certification to the SFI Standard assures the public that the lands are being managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and the ability of the land to produce goods and services for future generations is not compromised.

“By becoming certified we are basically solidifying that we are doing a good job with managing the public’s assets,” said SRWMD Forester Randy Hall. “We have been recognized as the first public organization in Florida to achieve this honor.”

Certification by SFI means international recognition for organizations as well as other benefits such as improved environmental management and documentation of District operations.

The SFI program is based on the premise that responsible environmental behavior and sound business practices can co-exist. SFI is the primary forest certification system adopted by the forest industry. It promotes responsible forest management in North America and responsible procurement globally. The program has 219 participants and 137 million enrolled acres across North America.

Monticello Water Reuse Project Ceremony



Above:
City of Monticello Project Engineer Joe Miller explains the sources of funding and how the project came to fruition. Miller told the audience that this project is proof that small cities, state agencies and businesses can work together by forming public/private partnerships to protect the environment. Project partners include: the District, Florida Department of Agriculture, City of Monticello and Simpson Nursery.

Below:

District staff and governing board members joined forces with other state and local officials to kick off the beginning of the Monticello Water Reuse Project. The reclaimed water project will deliver highly treated wastewater to Simpson Nursery to offset existing groundwater withdrawals. Back row (l to r): Executive Director David Still, Governing Board Chairman Louis Shiver, Governing Board Vice-Chairman J.P. Maultsby. Front row (l to r): Director of Governmental Affairs Steve Minnis and Senator Paula Dockery, who is responsible for championing the state's alternative water funding efforts.



NEWS BRIEFS

Otter Springs

A lease agreement has been executed with Gilchrist County for management of the Otter Springs Park and Campground recently purchased by the District. County and District staff continue to work together for a smooth transition.

TIP Presentations

The Ichetucknee Partnership (TIP) coordinator made presentations to the Florida Trail Association, Lake City Rotary, Natural Resources Leadership Institute and Ichetucknee Springs Working Group.

Financial Reporting Award

The District received notification that the Government Finance Officers Association has awarded the District a Certificate of Achievement in financial reporting for its 2007 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. This is the sixteenth year that the District has received the award.

Rule Development

The District held a series of stakeholders meetings informing water users of proposed rule changes and development for chapter 40B-2 Florida Administrative Code.

City of Cedar Key Reuse Agreement

Staff received permission by the Governing Board to enter into a reuse agreement with the City of Cedar Key. The project will provide storage and improve reclaimed water distribution to reduce groundwater withdrawals.

Mallory Swamp

Prescribed burning took place on 262 acres at Mallory Swamp to help maintain natural plant communities.

Calendar

December

9--Governing Board Meeting--9 AM
25--Christmas Holiday--Offices Closed

January

13--Governing Board Meeting--9 AM
19--MLK Holiday--Offices Closed

February

10--Governing Board Meeting--9 AM
16--Presidents Day Holiday--Offices Closed

RiverFronts

is produced by the Suwannee River Water Management District.

Editor

Holly Stalvey

Executive Director

David Still

Governing Board

Louis C. Shiver, *Chair*
J.P. Maulsby, *Vice Chair*
Georgia C. Jones, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Dr. C. Linden Davidson
Heath M. Davis
N. David Flagg
Oliver J. Lake
Donald J. Quincey, Jr.

9225 CR 49
Live Oak, FL 32060
386.362.1001
www.mysuwanneeriver.com

Santa Fe Basin Farmers Honored at CARES Dinner



Columbia County farmer Michael Tice is presented a CARES plaque by Agriculture Commissioner Charles Bronson (right) and Florida Farm Bureau Assistant to the President Pat Cockrell.

Seventeen North Florida farmers were honored guests at the 6th annual Santa Fe basin CARES supper and celebration held at the De-Champlain Heaven's Gate Farm in Trenton, Fla. on October 30. Farmers being honored represented five counties in North Florida—Gilchrist, Levy, Alachua, Columbia and Brad-

ford. An estimated 400 attendees gathered to recognize the positive efforts being made to protect and conserve water in North Florida.

CARES (County Alliance for Responsible Environmental Stewardship) is a program developed by the Suwannee River Partnership and Florida Farm Bureau to promote sound environmental and agricultural practices that help save water, prevent pollution and conserve energy.

More information about CARES is available at www.thisfarmcares.org or www.suwannee.org.

PRRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GAINESVILLE FL
PERMIT NO 702

SRWMD
9225 CR 49
Live Oak, FL 32060

