

RiverFronts
is produced by the
Suwannee River Water
Management District.

Editor
Cynthia Johnson

Executive Director
Jerry A. Scarborough

Governing Board
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J.P. Maulsby,
Vice Chairman
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Secretary/Treasurer
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N. David Flagg
O. J. Lake
Sylvia Tatum

9225 CR 49
Live Oak, FL 32060
800.226.1066 (FL toll free)
386.362.1001
www.mysuwanneeriver.com

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Volunteers clean up Aucilla on National Public Lands Day



Megan Wetherington, District water resource engineer, joined dozens of volunteers for an Aucilla River cleanup in conjunction with National Public Lands Day in September. District public lands coordinator Edwin McCook also participated, and arranged for volunteers from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Trail Association to camp overnight on District land at Goose Pasture.

Santa Fe basin farmers honored for resource stewardship

Gilchrist County farmer Larry Langford (center) is one of 14 agriculturists honored for outstanding environmental stewardship at the annual Santa Fe Basin CARES Dinner held near Trenton in October. CARES (County Alliance for Responsible Environmental Stewardship) is a recognition program of Florida Farm Bureau and the Suwannee River Partnership that highlights efforts by farm owners to improve natural resource management. Presenting award is Farm Bureau President John Hoblick (left) and Agriculture Commissioner Charles Bronson.



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9225 CR 49
Live Oak, FL 32060



RiverFronts

Serving communities in the Suwannee, Santa Fe, Alapaha, Aucilla, Withlacoochee, Waccasassa and Coastal Basins

December 2007



Stormwater, reclaimed water projects top priorities for 2008

The District has budgeted \$17.2 million for stormwater, water supply, and reclaimed water (reuse) projects for local communities in 2008.

The stormwater improvement projects will alleviate flooding and improve the water quality of stormwater runoff.

The reuse projects will enhance water conservation by offsetting groundwater withdrawals. The projects involve development of water treatment, distribution and storage facilities.

Following is a brief status report for each project:

City of Alachua Reuse: \$1 million - Staff is coordinating with City to develop scope of work.

High Springs Reuse:

\$2 million - Scope of work completed; design engineering underway

Lake City Reuse:

\$3 million - Draft scope of work completed

Live Oak Reuse:

\$3.7 million - reclaimed water storage tank under construction; upgrades to wastewater treatment system nearing completion

Monticello Reuse: \$1.5 million - City and Simpson Nursery executed contract; planning, engineering and design completed

Newberry Reuse:

\$1 million - interlocal agreement pending

Columbia County Stormwater:

\$3 million - Engineering studies underway for Cannon



Live Oak reclaimed water treatment facility under construction

Creek, Alligator Lake, Clay Hole Creek and Falling Creek basins.

Lake City Stormwater:

\$100,000 - Capital improvement plan completed, interlocal agreement pending

Jasper Stormwater:

\$1 million - Negotiations underway for engineering services

Live Oak Street Drainage:

\$135,000 - Environmental Resource Permit issued; engineering firm and City developing 5-year stormwater plan; working out funding and design issues with FL Dept. of Transportation

Live Oak Stormwater Utility: \$100,000 - engineering studies underway

Starke Stormwater (Alligator Creek): \$250,000 - Engineering design proposal prepared; staff requesting additional funds from Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Starke Stormwater (Pratt Street): \$1.4 million - Construction underway

R.O. RANCH sponsored the wagon carrying "Granny and Pappy" Minnie and Buck Hatch, grand marshals of the 2007 Pioneer Days Parade held in Mayo.

Several dozen riders and campers stayed on the ranch property during the annual October event.

R.O. Ranch is a 2,500-acre equestrian center being developed in Lafayette County by the District and R.O. Ranch, Inc., a nonprofit corporation.

www.roranch.org



NEWS BRIEFS

FEMA MAPPING

A final public hearing was held in September to review the new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) for Suwannee County and the cities of Branford and Live Oak.

The revisions are expected to take effect in July or August 2008.

Preliminary DFIRM community coordination meetings and scoping meeting were held in Hamilton, Madison, Taylor and Union counties in November.

MFLs MEETING

The District held its first public meeting for the establishment of MFLs for the Withlacoochee River and associated springs in the town of Lee in October.

TRI-COUNTY WATER SUPPLY INITIATIVE

The District continues to facilitate coordination between the cities of Chiefland, Fanning Springs and Trenton to develop a regional water supply plan.

The District hosted a workshop for the cities in September.

WATER WELL WORKSHOP

About 60 contractors attended a continuing education workshop hosted by the District in September for the North Central Florida Water Well Association.

GIS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The District hosted a Geographic Information System (GIS) Partnership workshop for cities and counties participating in the project to review the program over the past year, get feed-

back from the partners for any enhancements, mention new parcel and imagery data, and to provide GIS technical tips, data collection solutions, and sources of GIS training.

Elsewhere, staff set up computers and printers and installed the GIS software and data for the cities of Perry and High Springs.

DISTRICT LANDS

MALLORY SWAMP CELEBRATION

In November, a barbecue luncheon was held to honor the many partners who have helped in the restoration of the 29,000-acre Mallory Swamp, in Lafayette County.

Dozens of guests gathered to celebrate the completion of \$1.9-million in restoration projects, as well as the start of future restoration work funded with an additional \$1.4 million from the federal Wetlands Reserve Program.

The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Restoration work included roller-chopping shrub growth, performing prescribed burns, and installing 200 culverts to restore the natural flow of water in the swamp.

The measures are meant to prevent another catastrophic wildfire such as the one that occurred in the swamp in 2001.

ACQUISITION CLOSINGS

- Sganga/Little Shoals, a one-acre lot in Columbia County is an addition to the Little Shoals tract.

- The 1,104-acre McEnany Conservation Easement in Levy County, adjacent to the District's conservation easement with Plum Creek near the Waccasassa Bay.
- Conservation easement on the Robert Tisdale parcel in Levy County, an 83-acre tract adding to a series of conservation easements connecting Manatee Springs State Park and the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge east of the Suwannee River.
- B. Larry and Christine Smith property in Dixie County, a 48-acre parcel along the Suwannee River and adjacent to CR 317. It is also adjacent to a 42-acre parcel previously purchased by the District.



District Governing Board Chairman Louis Shiver (far right) presents a framed photo of Mallory Swamp to Richard Coombe, Regional Assistant Chief - East for NRCS. Niles Glasgow, NRCS State Conservationist (Florida), holds a plaque presented by the District in appreciation for his leadership on the restoration project, at the Mallory Swamp Celebration in October.

RECREATION

- General gun season is open on District lands that are part of 14 wildlife management areas and 2 national wildlife refuges.
- A Devil's Hammock brochure has been com-

pleted by the District in collaboration with Levy County.

- A total of 51 special use authorizations were issued during November: 11 for recreation, 36 for R.O. Ranch, and 4 for temporary access.

OUTREACH - TRAINING - EDUCATION

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Right: Executive Director Jerry Scarborough fields audience questions as the District wrapped up its year-long series of meetings with local chambers of commerce with a luncheon presentation in High Springs in November. Throughout the year, various District staff presented a program on "Meeting the Challenges: Growth, Economy and Environment" to 17 chambers and an estimated 850 members. The message emphasized the importance of partnerships.



CERTIFIED FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

Left: The District hosted a 4-day training course for officials responsible for administering local floodplain management ordinances. At the end of the course, exams were given to participants seeking to become Certified Floodplain Managers. Individuals from around the state came to receive instruction from Dr. Prasad Inmala, and Susan Wilson, representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 4, Atlanta.



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PERMITTING

Right: The District invited engineers and others involved in the permitting process to an evening workshop in November. Staff provided information on District permitting rules and advice on how to more efficiently navigate through the Environmental Resource Permitting process.

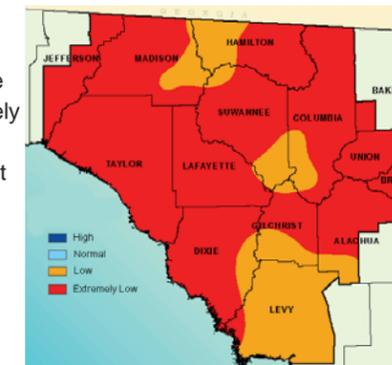


Groundwater levels remain low

As the red on this map indicates, groundwater levels in most parts of the District remained extremely low in October.

November data was not available when this newsletter went to print.

Monthly maps and hydrologic conditions reports are available at mysuwanneeriver.com



STAFF NOTES

David Still, deputy executive director, was presented an Honorary American FFA Degree at the 80th National FFA Convention hosted in Indianapolis in October.

The award is presented by the National FFA Organization (formerly known as the Future Farmers of America) to individuals who "have gone beyond the valuable daily contributions to make an extraordinary long-term difference in the lives of students,

inspiring confidence in a new generation of agriculturists."

Deputy Executive Director **Charlie Houser** and **Bob Heeke**, senior land resource manager, have earned certification as Environmental Management System (EMS) Lead Auditors.

Houser also received the Certified Forester Auditor accreditation from the Society of American Foresters.