

District Notes & News



Established 1923

Summer 2004

SUPERVISORS

Thomas H. Powell

President

Tom Rice

Vice-President

David Beane

Robert Berman

Michael Danchuk

STAFF

Gale English

General Manager

Greta Rayman

Office Administrator

DISTRICT OFFICE

15600 Jupiter Farms Road
Jupiter, FL 33478
(561) 747-0550

www.sirwcd.org
sirwcd@sirwcd.org

Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday

*The Board of Supervisors meets
the third Thursday of each
month at the Jupiter High
School Media Center
at 7:30 p.m.
Contact the District Office
for an agenda.*

TWO PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH JULY 15 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

Two public hearings were held prior to the regularly scheduled South Indian River Water Control District (SIRWCD) Board of Supervisors monthly meeting on Thursday, July 15.

The first public hearing was on the 2004 Landowner-Initiated Roadway Improvement Project. The District Engineer, Len Lindhal, presented an overview of the project. Of 686 parcels in the benefitted area outlined in the referendums, the certified ballot results showed that 517 votes (75%) were received by the Supervisor of Elections office. Of those voting, 361 (70%) were for the road improvements and 156 (30%) were against.

The second hearing was on the Palm Beach County Estates Potable Water Project. Lindhal reported the board had officially accepted the certified election results of this referendum at the July 17, 2003 board of directors meeting, with 754 (63%) votes

in favor and 442 (37%) against the project. He reiterated that the interlocal agreement currently being negotiated with the Town of Jupiter to provide water would *not* require annexation. More detailed design and construction information on this project will be provided in an upcoming edition of this newsletter.

After taking public comments, the board concluded the hearings and directed the District Engineer to prepare the Engineer's Reports for both proposed plan amendments.

The second public hearings for each project, as required by law, will be scheduled within 30 to 60 days after filing of the Engineer's Reports with the Secretary of the District, and will tentatively be held in conjunction with the October regular board meeting. Watch for information regarding these hearings in local papers, this newsletter, and on SIRWCD's website.

Florida Stormwater Education Corner Protecting Florida's Water

Did you know that...

- At least 50% of the water quality problems in the U.S. result from non-point source (NPS) pollution (commonly referred to as stormwater runoff)?
- Five quarts of used motor oil can create an oil slick two football fields in size?
- Yard fertilizer runoff from residential areas is estimated to be responsible for one third of the excess nitrogen polluting our waterways?

NPS pollution comes from our homes, yards, streets, farms, and

commercial property. This includes substances such as detergents, oil, lawn clippings, pesticides, soil erosion, and even viruses, bacteria, and nutrients from pet waste and failing septic systems. When it rains, these pollutants can run off the land and directly into our lakes, rivers, and streams. These pollutants can harm fish and wildlife, kill native vegetation, and foul drinking water supplies and recreational bodies of water. And all of us contribute to this stormwater pollution problem.

In future issues, we will highlight goals of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) stormwater mandates and give you tips on how you can help!

Palm Beach County Vegetation Preservation and Protection Ordinance

The District has been notified by Palm Beach County that some landowners are violating the Palm Beach County Vegetation Preservation and Protection Ordinance. The Ordinance has been in effect for unincorporated Palm Beach County since 1992. The Ordinance applies to all parcels - improved or unimproved; residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural; small or large; public or private. It also can include utility and canal easements and road rights-of-way. This information is provided as a courtesy to District landowners.

The premise of the Ordinance is to preserve and protect native vegetation. This can be accomplished by removing prohibited and invasive non-native vegetation, which crowds out native vegetation. Or you can replace native vegetation lost to land development or clearing with additional native vegetation. There are exemptions for ongoing agricultural activities (harvesting of crops), ongoing maintenance of canals and easements, surveying, forest management, and some mitigation projects.

There are requirements for obtaining permits for removal of native and non-native vegetation. Some have a cost (standard, *specimen tree removal*, and *vegetation removal notice*), and some do not (general, typically used for removal of prohibited and invasive non-native vegetation, and De Minimus approvals).

The typical permit is the *vegetation removal notice*, which covers single-family, residential parcels under 2.5 acres that do not

have specimen-sized native trees requiring removal during construction. If specimen trees are to be removed from any sized parcel before, during, or after construction, a *specimen tree removal permit* is required and the *vegetation removal notice* is no longer valid. For native vegetation removal from any sized parcel at any time other than during construction, a *standard permit* may be required.

For residential parcels 2.5 acres or greater, or any other type parcel, regardless of size, a *standard permit* may be required to remove native vegetation. A *De Minimus approval* may be granted for parcels with hazardous trees; trees that may be in conflict with a "Fire Wise" program; trees that have been so damaged that they may become a hazard; smaller trees to be selectively removed to provide other trees the space to grow; and, trees that may be determined to negatively impact the integrity of a structure.

A *general permit* may be issued for the removal of prohibited and invasive non-native vegetation in advance of construction. After the nuisance vegetation is removed, the parcel shall be kept free of nuisance vegetation. Once the parcel is improved, no additional general permit is required to maintain the parcel.

There are no permits required for the removal of non-native trees, including, but not limited to citrus, mango, cocoanut, areca or queen palms, black olive, Ficus (other than strangler fig - a native Ficus), Norfolk Island pine, or eucalyptus.

Examples of vegetation that require permits to remove include, but are not limited to, slash and sand pines, oaks, cypress, bay, dahoon holly, myrsine, cocoplum, buttonwood, gumbo limbo, red maple, strangler fig, sabal and Florida royal palm, wax myrtle, mahogany, mangroves, and seagrape. Native trees may be pruned without a permit as long as they are maintained to the standards of the American National Standards Institute. "Lolly-popping" is not permitted.

The Ordinance also provides for potential penalties for violations. State law allows the County to assess penalties up to \$1,000 per day, per violation for the first offense and \$5,000 per day, per violation for a second offense. If the offense is deemed to be irreparable or irreversible, the penalty can be up to \$15,000. Violations may include, but are not limited to, violation of permit conditions or Ordinance requirements, removal of native vegetation without a permit, removal of invasive non-native vegetation from an unimproved parcel without a permit, excessive alteration (trimming) of native vegetation, removal of vegetation beyond what is necessary to accomplish the site plan, acts that cause damage to or kill native vegetation (covering roots with fill or other material, compacting the root zone or running into trees with heavy equipment, flooding native trees, improper burning, or improper use of pesticides). For more information call 233-2400 or visit www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm/divisions/protection/art9.htm#95.



15600 Jupiter Farms Road
Jupiter, FL 33478

Dates of Interest

August 19

***Public Hearing and Meeting
Annual Budget***

September 16

***Annual Landowners Meeting
Board of Supervisors Elections
Ballots Due***

October 23

Annual Landowners Family Day

Visit www.sirwcd.org
for news updates!