

Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan Update- Progress Report

The Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan (Plan) update is underway. The first public workshop was held in June 2004. Since that time, there have been three additional public workshops on the West Coast. Public participation and input is being coordinated through the District's Water Resources Advisory Commission (WRAC). The WRAC serves as an advisory body to the Governing Board, and as a forum for improving public participation and decision-making in water resource issues affecting south Florida. The WRAC includes members from various interests (e.g., environmental, urban and agricultural) throughout the District. The workshops are open to the public and public participation is encouraged.

The planning process for the development of this update includes comprehensive public participation, coordination with local governments and other agencies, review of previous planning efforts in the region, documentation of activities that have taken place since the approval of the 2000 Plan, and development of 2025 demand projections. The Plan update will take into account what has been implemented over the past five years and what remains to be done, as well as consideration of the changes in demand, population, industry and agriculture. The update extends the planning horizon to the year 2025. Planners work to bring community decision makers together so that projects and programs are in place to meet future water needs.

High-tech computer models are used to analyze the impacts of growth on the natural resources. Planners monitor rate and pattern changes of growth in population and industry. Two sophisticated models are being developed to monitor water available in deep aquifers such as the brackish Floridan Aquifer and the shallower fresh water aquifers. Work on both of these models is underway and proceeding.

Implementation of the 2000 Plan focused on options to meet the water supply needs of the Lower West Coast region including:

- Conservation
- Groundwater (Surficial, Intermediate and Floridan Aquifers)
- Reclaimed Water, especially the Regional Irrigation Distribution System (RIDS)
- Storage (Aquifer Storage and Recovery and Reservoirs)

Legislation passed in the 2005 session assures more money will be available to implement alternative water supply development so greatly needed in the region. Alternatives include many types of efforts such as use of reclaimed water, new water treatment or storage facilities, expanding regional water delivery systems, and desalination. The legislation also included the extension of water supply plan updates statewide to plan for capital projects, taking advantage of the new funding options.

Several Plan update workshops are planned through the Fall of 2006. The workshops are open to the public and participation is strongly encouraged. The next Plan update workshop is planned for later this year.

District staff continue to work with officials and interested parties to meet the Region's water supply needs.

For Additional Information: Contact LWC Plan Manager Linda Hoppes at lhoppes@sfwmd.gov or visit <http://www.sfwmd.gov/org/wsd/wsp/lwcwsp.htm>