General Drainage History of Palm Beach County

Presented to: Palm Beach County Water Resource Task Force

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In August 1848, U.S. Congress gave the “swamp and overflowed lands” to the State of Florida with the condition that they be drained.

Note: Florida Became a State in 1845.
Population Patterns

Density of Population 1840

Density of Population 1860

Density of Population 1880

Figure 12A

Figure 12B

Figure 13A

Density of Population 1900

Density of Population 1920

Density of Population 1940

Figure 12C

Figure 12D

Figure 13B
ICW Dredging - Early 1900s
View looking west along Lateral 2 at Station 102+50. This is the Loxahatchee Slough. The County has driven piling, shown in the picture to the right, for the Okeechobee Road. This station is beginning of McKenzie's work. Machine is shown dimly in the distance. Photo taken April 29, 1918, by J.C. Wagen.
LWDD E-2 along Future Turnpike at Lake Worth Rd. November 1919
LWDD E-1 Along Future SR7 circa 1920
Flagler Bridge into Palm Beach circa 1920
Boynton Inlet circa 1920
Palm Beach Pier  circa 1925
Everglades Drainage District

Original Map

Circa 1924

Created by Governor Broward
1926 Hurricane Erosion
Ocean Blvd. – Palm Beach
1926 Hurricane Damage
Bulkhead Construction
circa 1927
Groin Construction along Palm Beach circa 1927
Completed Groins circa 1928
Downtown West Palm Beach
After 1928 Hurricane
View of Lake Okeechobee in 1913
Lake Harbor
Glades Area
After 1928 Hurricane
1928 Hurricane Flooding Limits
1940 Aerial of West Palm Beach
Military Trail North of Okeechobee Blvd. Circa 1946
Military Trail North of Okeechobee Blvd. Circa 1946
Military Trail and Lake Worth Road circa 1940
Military Trail in Boynton circa 1945
Lantana Airport 1946
Drainage Ditch into Lake Osborne 1946
North of Lantana Airport 1946
“Western” Palm Beach County 1946
Dredging Lake Osborne 1946
Kissimmee River
1947 Hurricane
1947 Hurricane Glades Flooding
1947 Hurricane Flooding

- Andrews Avenue after 1947 hurricane hit Fort Lauderdale
- Sept. 18, 1947
- At one point, 12 inches of rain fell in a 30 minute period.

- Courtesy of the Sun Sentinel & Fort Lauderdale Historical Society
Areas Flooded in 1947
The Central and Southern Florida Project

“Central and Southern Florida Project for Flood Control and Other Purposes”
Authorized in 1948
Constructed in 1950’s thru 1970’s

Operated in accordance with USACOE criteria by:
USACOE & SFWMD
Wooden Bridge Deterioration circa 1947
ICW Bridge Pile Caps
circa 1950
ICW Bridge Railing circa 1950
“Westward Expansion”
December 1968
Our Challenges For The Future

• Continued Growth

• Higher Potable Water Demand

• Sea Level Rise

• Salt water Intrusion

• Stormwater Storage and Discharges
Possible Ways to Address These Issues

• Use of Low Impact Development designs to lessen discharges from new development

• Retrofit existing stormwater systems as needed

• Create more water storage areas in existing developed areas

• Create more interconnects between watersheds

• Continue to encourage conservation
Questions?